1:Sanders Z-5H (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

233 221 [476] children, pots and pans, donkeys, and a few articles of clothing left them after destruction of their village by the Communist guerrillas several years earlier.

A later April day found us again in Tripolis. On the road we had once more been encountering flocks from Valtetsi, but this time they were headed up toward home. Fortunately, Stephanos Agriopoulos, our favorite waiter 123 in the Reed Restaurant, had relatives in Valtetsi and was eager to take us 124 there. We left the main highway at the new tuberculosis hospital, turning [743] toward the mountains on our right. The road was barely passable, evidently [491] the mere widening of a sheep track winding in and out but always up, along the edges of dry, bone dry, ravines. Now and then one of us had to get out to shove a rock from the road. En route Stephanos told us much about the people and the hard economic struggle they were facing. The road became less rocky as we neared the village. There were small fields, brilliant green, [361] with trees along the edges. The trees stood tall around the school and church, the center of the village, where their spring freshness and sturdiness cast a sort of tender protection over the ruined stone houses that were Valtetsi. It was only after we let the people unburden themselves of their more immediate troubles, such as rebuilding their houses, that we could turn to a description of their customary semiannual migration with their flocks.

727 669 [361] Valtetsi, with its one hundred eighty families, had not suffered under the German occupation as had so many other Greek villages. Completely off any reasonable facsimile of a road, it was not visited by the invaders; but for this very reason it was frequented by the Communist guerrillas in the 1940s as they struggled for control of Greece. The Communist leaders repeatedly tried to persuade the people to join their side, but the Valtetsi residents refused. In anger at this refusal and with the words, "if you are not for us, you are against us," the Communists descended upon the village one day and killed about one hundred people, mostly men. They burned most of the houses and took the women and children off with them. Each man to whom we talked had some personal tragedy to relate and could show us the name of some close relative or friend on the marble monument by the church erected in honor of these victims of the Communist 727 guerrillas. As a constant reminder of that terrible day, the houses still 362 stood in ruins — six years later. We went from house to house and found that through lack of lumber the second stories had not been built back, nor had there been tile available for the roofs. Many of the families were holed in, as it were, on the first floor, pretty much exposed to the elements during the six months of their sojourn "at home." Yet the people were friendly, glad to see us. Their mobile faces were alive. They smiled easily, were full of curiosity, and bubbled with wit. The state of dilapidation was [123] even more noticeable when the village secretary and president, in order to give us a drink of ouzo "for the road," had to ferret out a bottle and a few

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos

will buy to put on his lead ram. Then he will pick another deep bell for his eldest ewe, but will always test it against the deepest bell for what seems to be harmony to his ear. As he buys the smaller bells with the higher sounds, he always compares each with the deepest bell. In a flock of about 200, he may have as many as 60 to 70 carefully tested bells. The sound of a flock grazing or in movement is always pleasing even to the casual passerby. But to the shepherd it is the sweetest music of all, for it is as though his own private orchestra were playing for him, telling him by each little sound much about the behavior of his flock. If one note is missing for very long, he becomes aware of it and investigates to see what is wrong. When all are ringing together, he feels his little universe is safe.

As I walked through the village, I tried to picture it in the cold and empty winter. Obviously, the people from Valtetsi scatter out quite widely once they get below. What kind of community can they maintain with such a migration pattern? The shepherd's answers to queries about organizational life gave a rough sketch of the Valtetsi community.

Like other villages, they have the village council. The president of the council, who happens to run a coffeehouse, must stay in the village throughout the year. He can, on occasion, get a two-week leave from the prefect in Tripolis.

"Suppose he owned livestock," I asked, "and had to take them to winter pastures below. What would he do?"

"Other members of his family would have to take care of the animals for him and he would remain here."

Local elections are postponed from winter until the return of most of the people in the spring. But for national elections the men leave the flocks with their womenfolk and older children and walk all the way back up to the village to cast their ballots.

Valtetsi also has its school board, church board, and a livestock cooperative that helps its members get some credit from the Agricultural Bank, with their flocks as collateral (it serves no marketing function). Yet the migration pattern affects even these organizations, for at the time of my visit the cooperative president had not yet returned from his winter's sojourn on the plain nor had all of the board members for the church or the school.

In spite of the periodic absence of its inhabitants, the loyalty to Valtetsi is strong. Not the least of village distinctions was the Battle of Valtetsi, in which local people claim that in 1821 the first victorious army of Greeks under Kolokotrones rose up against the Turks. Since the soldiers believed that the Virgin had aided that victory, taking part just as Hera and Athena did with their forces deployed in the Trojan War, a special church to the Virgin was built in the village in 1837. One of the most heinous

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
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621 / 669 [778] crimes of the Communist guerrillas in the late 1940s, according to the people, was their willful mutilation by bullets of some of the church's prized icons of the Virgin and saints.

Even when their houses are repaired and a new school is built as a result of a gift by former Valtetsi residents now in the United States, the problems of the people will not be solved. Every year they find it more difficult to locate grazing land for their flocks on the plains below, and they cannot get back to their prewar standard of living unless they can double or treble the number of their sheep. One complained: "The different owners down below are putting in crops on the land that used to lie fallow. They ask more money if we increase the size of our flocks. Since I had trouble with the man from whom I have been renting in the past near Kranidi, this year I went to Messenia instead. I made arrangements with a farmer to bring my flock there, paid him in advance, but when I got there with my sheep he had plowed the land promised to me and had planted potatoes. He had even plowed beneath the olive trees so that there was no grass for my sheep. I could only pasture one month there, lost the money I had paid in advance, and had to come back to Valtetsi ahead of schedule to get pasture for my flock."

233 234 511 [221] Other shepherds in the Peloponnesos are saying the same thing. Some, with whom we talked on the road from Kalamata to Megalopolis, were anxious to get to their home villages in the mountains. They were carrying their milk- and cheese-making equipment with them, but their women and children had gone on ahead to get the houses ready for summer occupancy. One man complained: "I haven't been able to make ends meet although I have two hundred sheep and have sold four thousand okas of milk. The pasture didn't grow because of the dry weather and I had to buy fodder for my animals."

233 474 We found some of the men working with others in partnerships termed *sebries*. One variety of sebria calls for a shepherd to look after and maintain the flock of another for three years. The losses and profits are equally shared. After the three-year time limit is up, each sebros (partner) takes by lot half of the common flock. If the cooperation comes to an end before the expected time limit, the division is made differently; that is, if it lasted for two years, the flock is divided into three parts and each partner takes one part; the third part is divided, two thirds to the man who owned the flock originally and one third to the shepherd. If it lasted one year, the owner receives five sixth and the shepherd one sixth of this third part. Another variation of the sebria was the pooling of animals by the owners into a flock which they jointly managed as a common flock and whose products they distributed in a proportion equal to the number of sheep contributed to the flock. This arrangement is made if the pasture land is too large for one man to manage. But even such cooperative arrangements

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
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[The Tselingata]

used for public works, especially for the operation of schools. All these accounts are regulated by the general assembly of the members of the union.

In my conversations with Berates, the visit to whom has just been described, I learned that he considered himself an architselingas. True enough, he owned most of the sheep, but he did allow the six men who worked for him to have flocks of their own, say fifty to sixty head, if they could get a start. One of his shepherds was assigned the task of keeping the records of milk production so that each one could have a share prorated on the basis of the number of animals in the common flock. Every six months Berates draws up a contract with those associated with him; he supervises the cheese production up in the highland pastures and even helps process the milk for some of the smaller owners who are not in position to set up their own plant.

Those who knew Epirus a generation or so ago tell of the great authority these chief shepherds had, each ruling in autocratic fashion his people and the area in which they were established. Should one of the shepherds associated with any of these chieftains become dissatisfied and want to move away, he found it impossible to attach himself to any other chief shepherd, for these men of position stuck together. In the days of turmoil and disorder early in this century, it was almost necessary for a small owner to be connected in some way with a leading figure who could protect him and represent him to outside authorities.[14]

The tselingata, from many accounts, were not necessarily based on kinship, though there were interesting examples of the group of relatives being so large that they formed a union by themselves. In such a case, age and generation would usually determine who had the authority and his word would carry great weight among the others.

Even today there are powerful chief shepherds. The mayor of the city of Egoumenitsa, along the Ionian Sea, was the head of the Petoules family which is run on the principles of the traditional tselingata. There are eighty members in the family and all of them obey him. In 1953 I was told that the Petoules family collectively owned from 12,000 to 14,000 sheep, in spite of the fact that on one day in 1948 the Communist guerrillas took 4,200 sheep from them. Although they owned sufficient land to graze at least 14,000 sheep, they were improving the pastures by sowing wild clover. The summer area alone added up to about 3,450 acres and the winter area was additional.

One official in describing this family said that in 1952 some of the governmental representatives in Ioannina were ordered by the central government to go to the head of the Petoules family and take some of the pasture land for the settlement of refugees who needed land. They expected trouble but were pleasantly surprised when the architselingas agreed to give the land and also went with them to select it. Two villages were constructed,

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

to graze all over the community area as soon as the harvest is in. If the farmers leave any grain in the fields after harvesting, the sheep seem to think it part of their daily ration and tackle it with delight. The farmers have little recourse, since the sheep owners are elected as community councilmen and officers of the cooperative and are always in a position to defend their interests.

Much the same situation prevails in a village near Agrinion where over seven thousand sheep and over one thousand goats are kept. Recently, some of what was formerly pasture land has been distributed to those without land, through a cooperative association newly formed for that purpose, thus restricting the amount of grazing area. These new owners, as well as others without livestock, resent the invasion of their fields by the flocks immediately after harvest. Little control can be exercised unless shepherds so desire, for none of the parcels are fenced off and it is customary to let the animals roam at will when crops are in.

The nomarch of Serrai stated that in his area of Macedonia it was very common for the whole community to rise up in protest against the pasturing of the flocks by shepherds on land belonging to the community. The shepherds insist that they will continue to use these lands; so the villagers come to the nomarch and ask whether or not they must let those so-and-sos graze sheep on their land. The nomarch assures them that they are within their rights to keep the shepherds off, and they leave the office with a determined look, as though no number of shepherds could budge them from their resolve. When these local leaders get back home, some shepherd comes up to them and says: "My sheep will die, my family will die if you don't let me use that land." The people then change their minds and give the shepherd permission to graze his flocks there. Later on, when they see the nomarch and he asks them what happened, they say: "Poor man, we couldn't let him starve, so we let the sheep graze there." But such disputes do not always end so amicably.

Another source of conflict is the lowly goat. The parties to the conflict are not peasants arguing it out with one another, but rather the forest service trying to forbid the peasants from keeping goats. During the dictatorship of General Metaxas (1936–1941), a law was passed and enforced which forbade the peasants from keeping goats. The justification for this measure is that goats, a browsing animal, do much more damage to the forests than do sheep, a grazing animal. In the case of a pastoral village in Western Macedonia, not far from Kastoria, the prewar number of eight thousand sheep and goats shrank during the conflict because of requisition by the guerrillas, army of occupation, and such, to seven hundred and fifty. In order to rebuild livestock numbers quickly as a means of eking out a living, the people got together flocks of goats. The Agricultural Office has supported them in this, while the Forestry Office opposes the idea. The

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

answer than that the farmers were incited by the Rally Party. As if there were any need of incitement in their case. One does not need incitement when one is hungry and sentenced to despair.[18]

The year does not matter, the name of the party does not matter, for in Greece a political, if not a social, gulf between the village and the city remains. Since 1952, as a later chapter will show, much has been done through the Agricultural Extension Service and other programs to better the condition of the peasantry. The success of such programs inevitably depends upon the skills and attitudes of those trying to carry them out in the name of the central government, but even more depends on the stability and continuity of the central government so that measures which are under way are not canceled and other political adventures substituted instead.

A peasant or a village president has three ways of straightening out some grievance involving the national government. First, he and his fellows can resort to strikes, demonstrations, and — in the case of the guerrilla war — to the support of those who would change the situation by revolution. Second, he can work through the regular administrative or executive channels already described. Through his local president and through the nomarch, many affairs can be carried to those in a position to settle the grievance, or in some cases he may take the time and trouble himself to go to some responsible official in the appropriate ministry for help. In other words, he is trying to find his way through the administrative apparatus of government and to use it to accomplish some objective. A third approach is to work through the political or legislative rather than the administrative channel. This means going to the representative from his district who serves in the national unicameral legislature in an effort to persuade him to intercede with the proper administrative officials. It might also mean going to some political leader, a former minister perhaps, to see if he can use his good graces in the matter.

Enough has been said thus far about Greek officialdom to show some of the difficulties that a villager, as an individual or as a community president, would face in making use of the administrative channels. Are the political outlets any more promising?

I once asked a peasant about a solidly constructed bridge we were then crossing. He said that it was obtained because one of their local people had been a member of parliament and had arranged to have this built. I wondered how long it would be before they had another member of parliament and thereby received some other needed project. And a mayor of one of the Thracian towns confided that he preferred the politically appointed nomarch to the career nomarch because one could go to the members of parliament and have them get an inefficient politically appointed nomarch

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Incidentally, the illiteracy rate (in 1951) was 18 percent among urban Greeks (24 percent of the women, 8 percent of the men); and 30 percent among rural Greeks (45 percent of the women, 14 percent of the men). Many extenuating circumstances explain the high illiteracy rate among the women, for great numbers of them grew up in parts of Greece which were under Turkish rule during their childhood. Furthermore, education of women in rural areas has not had the practical significance to the villagers that schooling a boy would have. As for the younger age groups, they were deprived of schooling during the war years. Even during the guerrilla war many schoolteachers stayed away from the villages because as intellectuals they would have had to take sides either for or against the Communist-led forces, and they did not want to get involved. Thus children were deprived of educational opportunities. School buildings also were destroyed. No wonder the more ambitious among them were asking, "What will happen to us if we can't read?"

Local Support for the School

Local school affairs are in the hands of the school board, which may consist of the teacher *ex officio* and of two others chosen by the village if it is small, or of five members if it is larger. The parents of the children in school are the ones usually involved in the election, but they know full well that the board can deal only with local matters such as finding money for current expenses including necessary books for the library, maintaining the building in reasonable repair, and determining various fees to be paid by the children. If the teacher, sent in by the central government, is not satisfactory, then the school board can complain to the inspector of schools but has no assurance that the next teacher will be any better suited to their needs should the present unsatisfactory one be replaced. Nor does the local school board have anything to say about what is taught in the school, since a uniform curriculum is followed throughout the country. In many parts of Greece, it is customary for the teacher to serve as cashier for the board, which handles fairly large sums contributed by the local people and the community council toward the education of their children.

One nomarch in Northern Greece said that out of the two hundred schools in his nomos (one hundred forty villages and sixty in urban suburbs), the patrons of sixty of them were willingly contributing money to pay for extra teachers as well as labor to pay for school enlargement. In spite of the comparatively large sums that are entrusted to the school board, the nomarch said that he had not known of a single case where money had been mishandled or misappropriated, a fact he attributed to the serious attitude the people take toward education. One problem, of course, is the uneconomic attempt by every little village to have its own school. Yet, because of transportation inadequacies, Greece is not ready to support con-

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

be taught exclusively in *katharevousa;* and in 1936, Metaxas, always using *demotike* himself, re-established teaching in the popular tongue throughout the primary schools and ordered the publication of an official grammar of the language.[17]

Since then, despite much outcry to the contrary, the demotike has remained the language of the elementary school.

I asked the Greeks on a number of occasions if the two languages about which they were arguing were really two different languages. They usually answered "yes" and "no": yes, because the demotike has a number of foreign words not found in the other and uses a different grammar; no, because there is considerable overlapping. In other words, to be educated is in a sense to become bilingual, an accomplishment which tends to create social distance between the upper and lower classes. But, interestingly enough, two members of the upper or educated class often speak to each other, not in the purist form, but in a demotike which has been transformed to a medium above the peasant level.

But what does all of this mean for the villager who has never studied katharevousa? He admits that when the teacher or the priest begins to use the latter he experiences, "a shiver of holy enthusiasm," [18] but he does not really follow fully what is said. Therefore, to reach the peasant, one must use demotike, which is a written as well as a spoken medium of communication. This is what the Communist press started doing, making use of what many consider a rather strange type of demotike but nevertheless one aimed at trying to get the Communist message across to the villagers and the lower classes in the cities. The non-Communist papers, although using demotike for news stories, continue to write their editorials in the learned, purist Greek, and official government documents continue to appear in the purist form. As a matter of fact, if one seems to prefer demotike as a writing medium over the katharevousa, many people consider one leftist and therefore somewhat suspect. This is why some of my Greek friends describe the language situation in Greece today as one of "anarchy and confusion." But there is some hope in Kimon Friar's words:

If in all this confusion, poverty and richness, the modern Greek poet [and he could mean any writer] sometimes despairs, he may remind himself that in periods of language formation great poets have arisen, a Chaucer, a Dante, and even a Shakespeare.[19]

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

575 [474] For men, the cooperatives are the chief associations, although meetings are relatively infrequent since these are primarily service organizations. They have not yet really taken on the educational role displayed by the youth or women's groups.

At best, these organizations which have been described exist to satisfy the interests of the members who affiliate. Unlike the institutionalized church board, school board, and community council, they do not exist to serve community-wide needs even though many of their stated purposes might contain grandiose aims. Most of these are not organizations which the villagers themselves have created, but have been formed in response to outside pressures and have been founded in the hope that they will do something to help the villagers have a better life. What makes the promotion 575 of such organizations difficult is the utter lack on the part of the peasant 571 of an abstract loyalty to an organization; he goes if he wants to or if he likes the agent from outside — not because he feels it his duty as a member to support the group of which he is a part.

Even if the numbers of organizations in rural Greece were doubled and the membership quadrupled, it is hardly likely that the Greek peasant would think of the "organizational approach" to problem solving. Where some Americans might get together and form a group to deal with a problem, the Greek peasants would either say "let the central government do it" or, if they are more sophisticated, relegate it to the community council to worry about. There is no tie-in between individual responsibility and membership-in-action groups, such as one finds in suburban America; the peasant is in the preorganization stage, which perhaps indicates why his life seems so untrammeled to those who get to know him well.

The Sense of Community

621 182 Greek village life has a unity in the sense that the peasants see their life as a whole and do not compartmentalize it in the way that it has been presented here. They make no distinction between religion and agriculture, family life and recreation, mutual aid and local government. Life flows on day by day, each day with its own tasks and joys, but marked by the variations which the seasons bring. Nor does the Greek villager distinguish in his mind among his village as a place or physical setting, his home, or the people who walk the streets. All these, to which we might also add the donkeys, goats, and other animals, possess a unity in that they fit together as a part of his accustomed world.

621 578 665 669 182 But Greek village life does not have a unity in the sense that there is perfect agreement within the community on every course of action or in the sense that people placidly sit by and concur in what a few self-appointed leaders might choose to do. Factions arise, and many of them persist. These can arise in time of war when rival armies visit the village in the search

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

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for enemy sympathizers, thus presenting a wonderful chance for the unscrupulous person to denounce a fellow villager with whom he wants to even an old score. In the choice of sides in the Communist-inspired guerrilla war, for example, definite factions came into existence and their lines have not been altogether obliterated today.

Despite factionalism and the lack of idyllic harmony, it is correct to say that most villagers feel a sense of community. It may seem entirely absent whenever people are trying to persuade the villagers to carry out community improvements from which they can see no immediate benefit, but it is there to be reckoned with whenever the reputation or the safety of the community is threatened. To try to explain the basis for this sense of community is to review much of what has already been said, but perhaps it can be understood in terms of four divergent strands: *philotimo*, or ultrasensitive self-esteem; a common living space; shared institutions; and an accepted system of social control.

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Philotimo. Social phenomena in Greece must be seen first in terms of individuals, who in turn cannot be understood without recognizing the national trait of philotimo. Dorothy Lee has clearly explained this complex character trait:

> Everyone has his *philotimo*, as an individual, as a member of a family, and, most of all, as a Greek. On this rests Greek individualism, since it is sheer being which is respected, not position in the world or achievement. On this rests Greek democracy and equality, since everyone, both as a person and as a Greek, is equal to everyone else, neither superior nor inferior. . . . This does not mean that there is lacking a balance of roles or interpersonal structuring; but these relationships of interdependence, of leader and followers, of division of areas of responsibility and work are not cast in the mold of superiority and inferiority. Inferiority comes only with the forfeiting of the *philotimo*. . . . The inner core of the Greek must never be exposed; and *entrope*, the Greek word for shame, modesty, decency, propriety, self-consciousness, embarrassment, means: "turning inward." This is a concept both positive and negative: you have done something shameful only because you have failed in the positive aspect, in modesty and decency. Out of *entrope* a Greek avoids saying things and doing things which would reflect on the *philotimo* of himself, his family, his country. For example, the self-made man in Greece does not boast of his rags-to-riches progress. This would expose the poverty of his village, the inability of his family to help him, the fact that his uncle or his godfather could not or did not do his duty by him; it would expose much that should remain decently covered, and would further prove him to be lacking in *philotimo*.[8]

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Dr. Lee then goes on to explain that the essence of philotimo is inviolability and freedom and that the sense of inviolability makes a Greek extremely "touchy." An offended philotimo leads to retaliation, not self-reproach. She writes:

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

178 727 669 166 World War II and the guerrilla war which followed constituted another major social upheaval. Whereas the Nazi forces often wreaked vengeance for sabotage upon settlements close to the main thoroughfares, the Communist forces stayed away from the main highways and brought disaster to mountain villages, such as Valtetsi in the Peloponnesos (Chapter 6). All countries occupied by an enemy suffer social as well as economic disorganization, but the case of Greece was aggravated by the nature of the guerrilla war. In order to protect the exposed rural people and to curb the unwilling (and sometimes willing) support of the Communist forces by the villagers upon whom the guerrillas descended for food and supplies, the central government in Athens removed a number of villagers, estimated at from 700,000 to 750,000, from their homes to quarters near some town or city. Because this was a temporary resettlement, most of the villagers did [657] not become incorporated into the local economy, which was not able to utilize such a volume of labor; instead, these migrants were supported by government subsidy which provided a bare minimum of services. But, as [369] earlier chapters have shown, this exposure of from one to two years to the city had a profound psychological impact upon the women and young people. The women learned that there was an "easier" life; the young people got many new ideas about dress and beauty aids, entertainment, types of indoor jobs, and patterns of greater independence from their parents. One girl who had worked in a factory in Salonica felt ashamed to carry water when she went back to her village, and moreover she wanted a regular income.

[831] [302] According to a prominent Greek child-welfare worker, the changes following the guerrilla war ranged from shifts in such basic values as virginity, with this being less highly esteemed than before the war, to the presence of bobbed hair and permanents in villagers where they had never been seen before. Before the war, such changes had been gradual; now they came suddenly. George Sakellopoulos, the inspector of agriculture in Ioannina, summarized very clearly the impact of this population displacement for his area:

[515] During the guerrilla war the people had to go to the towns. They lived in homes much better than they had known before. They learned to wash themselves, which many had not done before. When they were persuaded to go back to their villages, they took back the changes they had seen. Many of them went back reluctantly. While they were refugees they had a subsidy. When that was [657] cut off, they could no longer remain in the town house, for they could not pay the owner, who could kick them out. A free distribution of flour was made in the village, and not in the town, so they had to go back to the village to receive it. Then the tractor operators said they would plow only the fields of those who were actually in the village; even the army helped with the plowing. At first, there were some who stayed behind in the towns because their children were in school, but eventually the families were brought together again in the village.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Whereas the effect of the coming of the Asia Minor refugees was to increase the population and heighten the economic activity of the country, the effect of the stay of these northern villagers in town was to loosen somewhat the social cement that holds the kinship group and the village community together. It set in motion more perceptibly in Northern Greece what has long been characteristic of Central Greece and the Peloponnesos: the urbanization of the countryside, in the sense of the spreading influence of urban ways.

War is not the only source of cataclysmic change. Devastating earthquakes sometimes destroy densely populated areas. In 1953, shortly after we left Greece, earthquakes created havoc on the islands of Cephalonia and Zante. My former interpreter, Bessie Adossides, described this in a revealing letter:

> As soon as these earthquakes started, Mother and I presented ourselves to the Greek Red Cross and volunteered to go either to Cephalonia or Zante. Thus on August 13th we left via Patras for Zante. Mother was heading a group of eighteen volunteer nurses and, when we arrived at our destination, the whole town was still in flames and the place smelled of burned flesh. The disaster in the town of Zante was complete; only one church, a school, and a bank were standing. The panic, suffering, and agony of the population were indescribable. We found on our arrival that nurses from Patras had set up a provisionary tent hospital, but as there was not sufficient place for all the wounded and sick, these were being shipped to Patras. For two nights we stayed awake as the fire came very near the hospital and we had to be ready to carry everybody on board a ship in the harbor. Luckily this did not happen.

Although this letter describes the efforts of a few individuals, the whole Greek nation was asked to contribute to the reconstruction of these destroyed island communities. International agencies also helped. Such a catastrophic experience, with its rupturing of some social bonds and the forging of new ones, has brought about social changes in the areas affected. The economic drain resulted in readjustment of the government's plans for economic development, since substantial material resources had to be routed to this area of dire need. A few years before, the city of Volos in Thessaly had been badly affected; earlier it had been Corinth.

No matter what type of cataclysm occurs, when governmental authorities have to step in and assist in reconstruction, there is always the tendency — as expressed by one nomarch — for people to take "distribution of clothing, food, and medical care for granted, hoping it will go on forever." The fact that they have suffered entitles them, so they think, to continued support even after reconstruction days are past.

Social Drift

Even in a country as subjected to catastrophe as Greece, individuals decide whether or not to try new ways which they have seen or about which

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
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Athens-Piraeus region—is no more than about 85,000 souls. In terms of parishes there is considerable disparity between different dioceses: that of Ioannina, in Epirus, one of the largest, includes 230 parishes—many of them mere hamlets of forty or fifty families—while that of Nevrokopi, on the frontier of eastern Macedonia, has only fifteen. The average number is rather less than 100. If we take the twenty-four dioceses of Macedonia and Thrace, for example, we find that the average works out at seventy-eight parishes to the diocese, while the metropolitans of Philippi and Neapolis, Xanthi, Nevrokopi, Eleftheroupolis, Nea Zichni, Alexandroupolis and Hierissos all have less than sixty communities committed to their care, and only five bishops—the metropolitans of Salonica, Drama, Kilkis, Serres and Florina—more than 100.

As against this comparatively low average population and number of parishes one has, of course, to set in the balance the extremely primitive nature of the communications which the Greek bishop can command. To this day the majority of the villages of northern Greece are inaccessible to wheeled transport, at any rate during the winter months; and while the truly remarkable achievements of the last few years—the repair of the shattered railways, and the construction of roads and air-strips—have given Greece a very fair system of long-distance communications, the facilities which most bishops enjoy for travel within their own dioceses remain much as they have been since apostolic days. The metropolitan of a country diocese will think nothing of long journeys by mule or mountain pony across appallingly difficult terrain, his episcopal vestments slung from the high wooden saddle; of fording torrents swollen by the melting snows, and negotiating precipitous slopes where the path seems scarcely to afford adequate foothold for a goat—much less for an elderly ecclesiastic. It is little wonder that many mountain villages saw their father in God but seldom, even in the days before the natural hazards which confronted the traveller had been supplemented by mines and wandering bands of *katsapliades*, as the Communists were styled in the villages.

When we turn to the internal organisation of the dioceses we find many features which cannot but seem strange to most western Christians. We have come to take for granted the fact that a bishop, charged with the pastoral care of a vast and unmanageable diocese, inevitably delegates most of his priestly functions to his parish clergy. In the small country dioceses of Greece, however, the bishop retains a far greater measure of

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A VILLAGE FESTIVAL

Mary". To the simple Greek, however, it is *the* feast of the *Panaghia*, which not the Marys only but also the men and boys named Panaghiotis keep as their name-day: a very much more important occasion in Greece than the mere commemoration of one's birth after the flesh. The importance of the festival is emphasised by a fast of two weeks' duration immediately preceding it.[1] The other liturgical commemorations of the *Theotokos* centre on particular events. March 25th, for example, apart from the national associations which have made it one of the greatest days of the year among Greeks, is essentially the memorial of the Annunciation: "To-day," runs the dismissal hymn, "is the chapter-head of our salvation and the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel brings the good news of grace". So with the other evangelical commemorations. The liturgy of August 15th, on the other hand, seems to sum up the whole work in the pattern of man's redemption of her who contained Him whom the heavens cannot contain, and who, through the mysterious operation of the life-giving Spirit, herself became the dwelling of the infinite Creator.

All creation rejoices in thee, thou who art highly favoured;
Both the assembly of the angels and the race of men.
O hallowed temple and logical paradise, the boast of virgins,
From whom God took flesh and became a little child,
Who is from all eternity our God.
For He made thy womb His throne
And fashioned thy body broader than the heavens.
All creation rejoices in thee, thou who art highly favoured:
Glory to thee!

*

On August 13th, 1949, furnished with a document wherein the officer commanding the Drama gendarmerie called upon all whom I should encounter in my travels to give me all conceivable manner of assistance, I embarked in the antique vehicle which then connected the village of Kato Nevrokopi with the rest of Christendom (it was blown up by a Communist mine a few months later). During the early stages of our somewhat wayward progress through the narrow streets of Drama it became evident, from the sounds which came from overhead that, in addition to the forty-four Greek passengers who occupied the

[1] [i.e. before Aug. 15th 41 - ANALYST]

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494 interior of the vehicle, there were others who had with less formality installed themselves amidst the multitudinous array of baggage, live-stock and firearms which renders every Greek bus incapable of passing beneath what used, in England at least, to be described as 'a low
491 bridge'. To the north of Drama the road crosses a dusty plain for
[669] several kilometres and then turns sharply to the right between two high peaks and winds laboriously up a rocky defile. Every few hundred yards there was a bridge: either guarded by a block-house, manned by men of the mobile section of the home-guard, or else lying in ruins and necessitating a perilous descent into a dried-up water course. These occasional outposts apart, we saw no human habitation for the best part of another twenty kilometres, when we reached the head of the pass. Here we halted for a few minutes and refreshed ourselves with cold mountain water from a stream by the roadside. Shortly after three
[726] o'clock we began the descent into the well-watered plateau, within sight of the Bulgarian frontier, on the northern fringe of which lies the village of Kato Nevrokopi, and which had been the scene of bitter fighting when the Germans poured into Greece in April, 1941. A few
346 minutes later we were among the houses of Nevrokopi and my fellow-
727 passengers pointed out to me the cottage, in no way distinguishable
793 from its neighbours save by the board bearing the Byzantine eagles and the inscription *ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΥΡΟΚΟΠΙΟΥ* beside the door, which, *faute de mieux*, has served as the bishop's headquarters since 1945: the old metropolis having been destroyed during the Bulgarian occupation of eastern Macedonia.

574 Half-past three on a warm August afternoon not being a discreet
[521] hour at which to call on a Greek bishop, I retired to the green shade of a vine beside the *plateia* to sip coffee and discuss such varied topics as the Bishop of Birmingham, Schiller and the Scottish liturgy (and, inevitably, the incredible folly of the British electorate in banishing Mr. Churchill to the opposition benches), with the commanding officer of the gendarmerie and other local celebrities. Meanwhile, a troop of small boys was despatched at regular intervals to reconnoitre in the vicinity of the
[513] metropolis. At half-past four it was reported that the windows were open (all true Greeks sleep with windows and shutters firmly closed), and I was thereupon escorted to the metropolis where I was warmly welcomed by the Bishop. We talked until a little after six o'clock,
796 when the *ephemerios*, or curate, of the parish arrived to lead the way to
788 church for evensong.

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later in the day. There was, alas! no bedding at the monastery, said Father Ambrose: everything had been carried off by the Communists, to equip a field-hospital which they had established in the mountains to the northward; "What is to be done? But we will find something for you when you return this evening."

We spent the rest of the day scrambling about the rocks and visiting long-abandoned monasteries and hermitages. At St. Nicolas—fast falling into ruin, and where one must tread with circumspection—we found a few paintings remaining in the two chapels and the refectory, as well as an iron chest containing liturgical books and an eikon of the Forerunner; elsewhere, nothing save slowly crumbling masonry and the all-enveloping silence. We paid a fleeting visit to Kalambaka and returned to St. Barlaam a little before sunset laden with cognac and cigarettes. Like the Great Meteoron, this monastery, which crowns the towering cliffs of Drakospelaia, was until quite recent times inaccessible save by net and windlass. It is a sixteenth-century foundation, having been built about 1517 by two brothers from Ioannina—Nektarios and Theophanes—on the site of the fourteenth-century hermitage founded by the solitary from whom the monastery takes its name. In 1950 it was inhabited by six monks. The *Igoumenos*, Father Christopher, told us he had been at the monastery for twenty-one years, and for another twenty years at a convent to the westward of Trikkala. He was seventy-seven—twelve years older than Father Ambrose, an Athenian who was ordained many years ago at Moni Petraki in the shadow of Lykavettos. This was the only one of the monasteries where we came across any novices. Father Bessarion (who came from a village near Larissa and who had seen service with the British army in the Middle East), had been received only five months earlier, as had another young deacon, a native of Chios. There were in addition two simple monks, one of them more than ninety years old.

That night it snowed heavily. Father Bessarion produced a threadbare carpet which, folded double, afforded us a little protection against the bitter cold; and he and a shepherd from Kalambaka, who was living at the monastery, kindled a huge fire which blazed on the open hearth of our cell until morning, while the wind howled along the deserted galleries, the ancient timbers groaned and shivered, and it seemed that an exceptionally heavy squall would send the whole monastery with its domed chapels and its frail scaffolding of cells and domestic buildings spinning off into the abyss. When daylight came we seemed to be sus-

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792 727 Daniel—a native of Thasos, who had taken refuge in the village of Palaiochori, on the lower slopes of Pangaion, when the district was invaded by the Bulgars. He was tortured before being put to death. The other monk who perished was the *hieromonachos* Sophronios, carried off as a hostage to Bulgaria. The *igoumenos* of the monastery, Gregorios Katsivakes, fled with several other monks to the village of Nikesiani, a few miles to the northward. There he fell into the hands of the Bulgars and was carried off into exile in northern Bulgaria. After six terrible months he was allowed to return, broken in health, to Nikesiani where he remained supported by the alms of the people.

[669] When the occupation was over, Mount Pangaion—together with the heights of Chalkidiki (with which it enjoys easy communications)—became a stronghold of the *katsapliades*. The coastal road between Cavalla and Salonica was closed to traffic after it had been mined repeatedly, and all vehicles had to make a long detour to the north of Pangaion by way of Drama and Serres. The ruins of Eikosiphoinisses remained uninhabited. Only recently have a handful of monks gone back to the monastery which lies desolate like the city of the Philippians amidst the marshes far below.

A few miles to the north-west of Eikosiphoinisses and close to the town of Serres stands another historic convent, that of St. John the Forerunner. This, too, has fallen a prey on more than one occasion to the rapacity of the Bulgars. In 1918 the conventual library was looted and its chief treasures carried off to the Bulgarian monastery of Rila. Thence, in due course, they were returned to the Greek government, and (with a view to their greater security), distributed amongst the libraries of Athens. The cataloguing of the library of this Macedonian convent had, incidentally, been carried out some years before this calamity by one who was subsequently to become a well-known figure throughout western Christendom: the late Metropolitan of Thyateira, Germanos.

In 1941 the monastery was sacked by the Bulgars. The monks joined the innumerable host of refugees. Several are said to have died of starvation in the streets of occupied Serres. Others escaped to Nigrita, Salonica and Athens. Seven of them came back in 1945 and were [669] joined by two novices. It was not long, however, before the monastery was again attacked and pillaged—this time by the Communists. Every scrap of food and clothing was carried off to sustain the democratic warriors of the mountains. In view of the constant threat of further

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raids, the Metropolitan of Serres arranged for rations to be sent daily to the monastery, and this state of affairs endured down till the summer of 1949, when it was considered safe to lay in stores once again. In the spring of 1950 only three monks were living in the convent: one of them a priest who could celebrate the divine mysteries. The other monks had been sent by the Metropolitan to serve in parishes of the diocese, where (owing to the very high proportion of casualties amongst the village clergy), the shortage of clergy was peculiarly grave.

All over northern Greece the same tragic history has been re-enacted time and time again. The monastery of Aghios Nikanor, Zavordas, lies at the heart of a barren and desolate region to the southward of Kozani, and within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Grevena. Like so many Greek monasteries its situation is remarkable: the summit of a high rock set amidst the swirling waters of the Aliakmon. The remoteness of its site, far from the lines of communication, brought this convent through the years of occupation unscathed; isolation, however, afforded little protection against the Communists. The monastery was attacked and looted; everything of the slightest value was borne off to the mountains together with the convent's pack-animals and its 300 sheep and goats. The abbot, Father Gabriel Balayiannes, and an older monk named Gerasimos Stathopoulos were murdered, and the survivors fled to the village of Palaiochori (some four hours' journey from the monastery) where they were still living when I visited this region in the spring of 1950.

Southwards, over the pass which skirts snow-capped Olympus and connects western Macedonia with the broad plains of Thessaly, stands the ancient monastery of Panaghia Olympiotissa at Elassona. This, too, was pillaged, the monks driven out, the abbot severely beaten, imprisoned and sent into exile. In almost every diocese of Macedonia, Thrace and Epirus the few surviving monasteries and their inhabitants have suffered a like fate.

The Abbé de St. Michon observes that in his day the Greek monk was a patriot who fought for the independence of his country, and who was loved for virtues which belong more to the soldier than to the man of prayer. The cannon of Megaspelaion were indeed used to some purpose against the Turk during the war of independence, and Urquhart gives a vivid description of his arrival at the monastery of Lezini, in the guise of a "goul or spirit of the marsh", with twenty muskets and a nine-pounder full of grape trained upon him. Alas! the monkish batteries

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diocese of Drama no less than forty of the 112 parish churches were burned down, as well as the monastery of Eikosiphoinisses. 722 727

Elsewhere in Greece, and particularly in those areas traversed by important lines of communication, the number of the homeless mounted steadily as guerilla activity drew savage reprisals upon the villages. One had only to spend a few days in the mountains which lie to the westward of the Thessalian township of Kalambaka, for example, to see something of the effect of these reprisal raids. Church after church was gutted: mere empty shells with fragments of ancient paintings clinging to the tottering walls. In this diocese of Trikka and Staghi alone, twenty-four village churches were completely destroyed during the occupation and many others more or less seriously damaged. Nor did the towns escape the flood of destruction: Edessa, for example, which was set on fire by the Germans on September 12th, 1944, and where five churches perished in the ensuing conflagration, or Iannitsa which suffered a like fate two days later; Larissa, which had scarcely recovered from an earthquake when it was bombed by the Italians, and Kerkyra where more than sixty per cent. of the buildings were destroyed or damaged. 795

After the occupying troops had withdrawn from Greece in the autumn of 1944 and the Communist sedition had met with its first reverse, there ensued a period of comparative tranquillity. The refugees returned to their villages and some progress was made in repairing the damage wrought during the years of occupation. But a greater trial was still to come. From the autumn of 1946 onwards the full violence of the armed sedition which had slowly been gathering its energies since its temporary set-back of December, 1944, was let loose upon the country dioceses. It was utterly out of question for the Greek army, even with the assistance of the gendarmerie and the local militia, to garrison hundreds of isolated hamlets lying in mountainous districts where communications were of the most rudimentary kind. The defence of the northern frontiers presented problems enough and to spare. It was not long, therefore, before the country people were forced to flee from their lands and homes and to seek refuge in those centres which possessed a garrison. Large areas of northern and central Greece were soon abandoned to the roving Communist bands. 722 727 669

Some of the refugees found their way to Athens and Salonica, but the majority crowded with their surviving animals and such few possessions as they had been able to carry with them in their flight into 722 362

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A DAY OF WASTENESS AND DESOLATION

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"Thy Church, O Christ our God, in all the world is adorned with the blood of thy martyrs as with purple and fine linen."

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But for every village *papas* who died, a dozen fled to the shelter of the nearest fortified post. Some went further afield, to live with relatives in Athens or the Piraeus, and in 1949 many bishops had, in addition to their catalogue of refugee clergy, a further list of those who were 'missing'—whose fate and whereabouts were unknown. Often a very large proportion of the clergy of a diocese were homeless: seventy-five of the ninety-three parish priests of the diocese of Grevena, for example, had been forced to abandon their parishes by the winter of 1948-49; while in the neighbouring see of Trikka and Staghi there were at that time no less than ninety-nine refugee clergy. The Lord Nikephoros, Metropolitan of Kastoria, told me that his sixty-three homeless *papades* included eighteen men, recently ordained after completing their training at the Kozani seminary, who had had no parochial experience under normal conditions. The economic situation of the refugee clergy was peculiarly difficult, deprived as they were of their fees as well as their lands.

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It is doubtful whether anything—not even the carrying off of Greek children to territories beyond the iron curtain—did more to deprive the Communists of any vestige of sympathy in the country districts of Greece than their barbarous treatment of churches and clergy. The impassioned harangues of the Communist schoolmaster could avail but little, in the face of this desecration of holy things, to commend his cause to a people whose deepest loyalties had been outraged. What could be expected of men who burned down churches and defaced the eikons of the saints; who laid their infernal engines within the very sanctuary before the holy table; who crucified priests, and pillaged the monasteries where prayer had been offered for the whole state of Christ's Church from time immemorial? What could words avail the unhappy perpetrators of such terrible deeds? The 'Accursed of God' might burn and pillage and make fervent protestation of the surpassing excellence of their aims, they could not wipe out the impression created by their manifest hatred of the Church. As after the disclosure of the atrocities committed during the battle for Athens and the Piraeus in December, 1944, so in the face of these new horrors, there was a widespread reluctance to admit that Greeks could perpetrate such deeds. The men who did such things must be Slavs or Bulgars—no Greek could be capable of such crimes against God and against his own nation.

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created as it were out of nothing. Everywhere these institutions were hastily improvised in the face of desperate and clamorous necessity, and, more often than not, maintained with a heroic disregard for the universal lack of material resources, and a courage worthy of a St. Vincent de Paul.

In almost every diocese the bishop bore a heavy responsibility in this work of relief. Nearly always he exercised a close personal supervision over the various institutions which had come into being in response to the need of a people driven, for the second time within less than ten years, from their homes and lands; over the *estia* where for several years milk was distributed daily to thousands of refugee children; the *paidikos stathmos* where infants were cared for during the day; the distribution of clothing, black stuff for cassocks, soap, cocoa, macaroni, beans, sugar, boots and shoes—all the multiplicity of urgently needed supplies with which a host of relief organisations, societies, British and American towns and villages, and private benefactors sought to succour the people of Greece in their distress.

At Siderokastro, for example, the Metropolitan (who as assistant bishop of Salonica was an ardent supporter of the work of the Near East Foundation during the period between the wars), founded a small hospital where poor families could receive free medical attention, as well as a remarkable school of housekeeping for girls of marriageable age. Like all the Macedonian 'despots', the Bishop was president of the local branch of the national relief organisation known as P.I.K.P.A., and supervised the two centres from which milk and cocoa were issued daily to thousands of refugee children from the villages of his diocese.

At Edessa, in western Macedonia, the Metropolitan founded, shortly after the end of the occupation, an orphanage for twenty-five boys. This was originally situated in a house on the outskirts of the town, but during the heavy fighting at Epiphany, 1949—when Naoussa, a few kilometres to the southward, was sacked by the Communists and more than 600 of its inhabitants carried away captive to the mountains —this building was extensively damaged and rendered almost uninhabitable. The Bishop then established his orphans under the care of a monk in a dilapidated Turkish house next to the metropolis, and this was subsequently transformed into a permanent orphanage. Not content with this, the Bishop proceeded to found two further orphanages attached to nearby monasteries, as soon as the district was sufficiently tranquil

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largest in the region—was complete and spectacular. The shattered walls were daubed with Communist slogans. We threaded our way amongst the ruined houses to a building on the farthest side of the village which had been roughly repaired to afford shelter for an advanced outpost, drank a glass of cognac whilst my escort laced up their boots and buckled on their equipment, and left for Spelaion and Trikomon shortly after eleven.

The paths were ice-bound and treacherous, the snow deep in places. Spelaion came into view after half an hour, set amongst towering cliffs. A long and laborious ascent between high rocks, the Venetikos murmuring through its gorge far below, the path clinging to precipitous cliffs rising from the dwarf oaks and myrtle to lose themselves in the grey mists that swirled about their summits, brought us to a point immediately below the village. After a stiff climb through massive fortifications of uncertain date, we suddenly found ourselves looking down upon a tiny Byzantine church with twin domes, sharply outlined against the untrodden snow; a sombre red jewel laid in a setting of purest white.

This proved to be the catholicon of a small monastery, dedicated to the Mother of God. The interior of the church was dark and silent as a tomb; within the sanctuary liturgical books, eikons and vestments were strewn in confusion. The book of the Gospels lay closed upon the holy table, between two reliquaries of tarnished silver. We found a few stumps of candle and lighted them before the eikons of the Lord and His Mother; the spluttering flames banished the darkness and disclosed the presence of a host of emaciated figures gazing down upon us from wall and eikonostasis. We said a prayer and withdrew.

Though the church was undamaged, the other buildings which enclosed three sides of the roughly quadrangular space occupied by the monastery were all in ruins. Below, in the centre of the village, we found a second church, dedicated to St. Athanasius. This too had escaped serious damage, though the windows were unglazed and dead leaves lay piled against the eikonostasis and rustled about the throne of the bishop. Inaccessible on the cliffs above the Venetikos, Spelaion seemed built to withstand a siege, and we were not surprised to find that it had apparently served as a base for the *katsapliades*. A large house in the centre of the village had evidently been the Communist headquarters, and party slogans were scrawled over every wall. When we returned to the monastery, where the animals had been tethered, the candles still

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727 flickered within the church. Leaving the saints to their solitary vigil we plunged deeper into the uninhabited wastes that stretched southward toward Metsovo and the Thebaid of Staghi.

During the course of the next four days we worked our way eastwards to Trikomon and Kipouryio, and then turned north towards Mavranaioi and Grevena, to complete the first part of my itinerary. At three of the villages on our route there were isolated garrisons: otherwise the whole district lay abandoned. We passed through hamlet after hamlet where every house was destroyed, where churches stood open to the skies and no living creature broke the three-year silence. At Kipouryio the chapel [669] of St. Paraskeve—a saint whose apparent connexion with the sixth day [346] of the week (in Greek, *paraskevē*, the day of preparation) has given rise [776] to some very singular local cults in the country districts—had been stripped of its furnishings and turned into a hospital by the Communists: empty bottles and boxes which had contained medical supplies lay strewn about the building.

[657] Upon our return to Grevena we encountered a vast multitude of ragged children straggling back towards the refugee camp, grasping huge slabs of bread and honey: more than 4,000 children were being fed daily at the *estia* outside the high school. We found the Lord Theokletos a little concerned lest I should have fallen into the hands of the *katsapliades*—communications in the mountains out beyond Mavranaioi were notoriously unreliable. I waded through the mud 484 with my captain from Volos to call on the colonel of the local militia, under whose protection I should be travelling for the rest of my itinerary. There was no news to be had anywhere save of the forthcoming elections.

At ten o'clock the following morning we were making slow progress westwards through melting snow: four militiamen, the president of the village of Elatos and myself; a large American mule floundering astern 727 with the baggage. Above the ruins of Doxaras we turned aside to view 346 the pile of stones which was all that remained of the church of St. George. A few families had returned to this hamlet and were living in nissen huts on the hillside below the ruined church. The whole village had been destroyed.

An hour later we found ourselves among the newly built cottages of Elatos. Above a cluster of wretched *kalyvai* rose the fabric of an unfinished church. The village, the president told us, had been burned down in July, 1942, and reduced to ruins. The work of rebuilding was begun

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week-end. Conversation turned to the subject of the parish clergy; Papa Athanasi was a whole-hearted admirer of the new system; he was not one who could learn only from the Lord or rest content with a mere facility in turning the pages of the service-books:

"The divine liturgy, *Kyrie Petre*, can be gabbled through by a man who is all but illiterate: we are called to be shepherds, and a shepherd has need of great knowledge and wisdom."

Next morning Father Athanasius celebrated the holy mysteries in the village church. It was one of the Saturdays of all souls, and the priest's daughter was early astir, making preparations for the commemoration of departed relatives and friends. Before the service was ended I left for the neighbouring village of Sydendron, where the curate, Papa Constantinos, introduced himself as "the priest who bore the machine-gun in the sacred company of the despot". St. Nicolas, Sydendron, had been a fine church, apparently dating from the sixteenth century. It had survived the years of occupation only to be set on fire by the Communists on the night of July 25th, 1947. The ancient frescoes were slowly crumbling away, but sufficient remained to show something of the former splendour of the church.

I lunched at the presbytery and rode on to Amygdalies in the early afternoon. Most of the village's 200 children seemed to be dancing barefoot in the sun outside their newly opened school: a nissen hut erected on the site of the building destroyed by the Germans in July, 1943. A huge new church was in process of construction, but work was at a standstill through lack of funds, and the liturgy had to be celebrated in a brick chapel hastily constructed in 1946 within the walls of the unfinished church. Being anxious to reach Aghios Georgios before nightfall I resisted the efforts of the parish priest to persuade me to stay the night at Amygdalies, and as twilight deepened into darkness came clattering down the steep slopes to the stream where a few children still lingered, on a mule which I would have pitted even against Urquhart's Aristotle, and dismounted outside the house of the president.

Aghios Georgios was one of the only two villages in the diocese of Grevena where the population had remained throughout the troubled years which followed the end of the occupation, and had, moreover, afforded shelter to many refugees from other communities. The church—a massive structure dating from the middle of the nineteenth century—stood on rising ground in the centre of the village. The

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windows had been blocked with masonry and stones, and the church, thus barricaded and surrounded by an elaborate system of trenches, pill-boxes and barbed wire defences, transformed into a citadel. Here the greater part of the population had taken refuge while the militia, with a stiffening of gendarmerie, had fought off an assault on the village which raged for a night and a day on May 8th-9th, 1948. The fabric had suffered extensive damage from mortar and machine-gun fire, but the Communists had eventually been driven off. Earlier, the village had suffered grievously at the hands of the Germans. Though the church had been spared, the school and a large proportion of the houses had been destroyed. The school was now flourishing in a large nissen hut: formerly it had been housed in the nave of the church.

On Sunday morning there was great scrubbing and polishing of muddy boots, and at half-past eight I ventured forth, looking as spruce as three weeks of sleeping in my clothes would permit, in company with the *proedros*. The latter was anxious not to be too early at church, and, since the second bell had not yet sounded, we went first to inspect the new school. After smoking a cigarette with the *didaskalos* we proceeded to the church at the third bell, followed by all the children of the village. When the liturgy was ended the president climbed with great dignity to the top of one of the pill-boxes and made an impassioned oration welcoming the representative of Greece's great and traditional ally to their gallant and Christ-loving village, and dwelling at some length on the ties which, despite the infernal machinations of the Accursed of God, would surely bind together for all ages the Hellenic and British nations. The said representative thereupon made a brief, but it is to be hoped fitting, reply to this masterpiece of presidential rhetoric, and the whole company drifted away in high good humour to sip cognac and discuss the latest news which had arrived from Kozani.

After a visit to the family of a young theologian from Salonica I went to feast, first with the president and then—at the dictates of charity rather than of appetite—with the parish priest also. The influence of the Kozani seminary had made itself felt in this village, and the catechetical school was in full swing as I passed the new school-house on my way to the parsonage. There the wine that makes glad the heart of man flowed freely, and it was a drowsy traveller who rode across the hills to the neighbouring village of Kivotos later that afternoon. Communications having proved unreliable, I was constrained to accept the hospitality of one of the churchwardens. Shortly before noon the

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following day I rode into Vatolakkos with an escort of six militiamen and fell straight into the hands of the parish priest, who was sunning himself on a bench outside the gendarmerie station. This *papas* was a graduate of the Kozani seminary; his father had been a priest in Smyrna (like Kivotos, this was a refugee village). He spoke with pride of the catechetical school which had been flourishing in the village since the previous autumn.

Vatolakkos, like Aghios Georgios, had never been abandoned by its inhabitants. Owing to its important position—astride the main road from Grevena to Kozani—it had been strongly garrisoned throughout the troubles, and had offered sanctuary to the fugitives from no less than ten neighbouring communities, despite the fact that the greater number of the houses had been destroyed in the German advance of 1941—there were bomb craters all along the road from Kivotos southward. The parish priest had sheltered five refugee families in his house for more than two years. The church, which had never been completed, had, according to the Bishop's report, been pillaged by the Germans. It had moreover been damaged by mortar fire during an attack on the village by the Communists. A new school had just been opened to take the place of the one destroyed by the Germans.

From Vatolakkos I succeeded in telephoning to army headquarters at Grevena, and shortly after three o'clock I was picked up by my friend from Iannina. After attending the evensong of the refugee clergy, in company with the Bishop's deacon, and a long talk with the fugitive *ephemerioi* of Spelaion and Kosmati, I paid a final visit to the metropolis. The Bishop was unwell: he had been ill for some time past, and I took my leave early. Some months later, after a letter enclosing photographs of the ruined churches of the diocese had remained long unanswered, I saw from a notice in *Ekklesia* that the Lord Theokletos had passed to his rest.

Like Father Ioakeim, his deacon, he was a native of the Piraeus and had laboured there for thirty-three years as vicar of the parish of St. Constantine before being called to take charge of the see of Grevena in the third year of the occupation. The state of the diocese even in those days was serious enough, and had the new *despotes* been able to foresee the full extent of the catastrophe which was to overwhelm the widely scattered communities committed to his charge within the space of another five years, he might understandably have shrunk from the heavy burden of responsibility that he was called to bear.

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'Ecclesiastical Seminaries' (*Ekklesiastika Phrontisteria*) some fourteen of which are now in existence. One of these, the Rizareion Ecclesiastical School at Athens, stands apart from the rest; it celebrated its centenary during the occupation and was for many years the sole institution of its kind in all Greece. Most of these seminaries, however, were founded within the last twenty years. The dioceses of Old Greece are now served by seminaries at Corinth, Patras and Pyrgos, in the Peloponnese, and at Lamia, Larissa and Volos. Crete has its own seminary. At Ioannina there is another older foundation, the *Hierodidaskaleion Vellas* (of which the present Archbishop of Athens was once director) which serves the whole of Epirus. The parish clergy of Thrace and eastern Macedonia can now attend courses at Xanthi (founded in 1945), at Aghia Anastasis in the Chalkidiki peninsula, or at Salonica, where there is a 'higher' seminary. Another post-war foundation at Kozani, in western Macedonia, may serve to illustrate the general characteristics of these training schools for country clergy. This seminary was subsequently transferred to Florina.

The Lower Ecclesiastical Seminary of the Metropolis of Kozani, as it was known locally, was founded in 1946, during the lull which followed the Varkiza agreement. The director was a lay theologian, a member of the Zoë Brotherhood, and the seminary was under the immediate supervision of the Metropolitan of Servia and Kozani. During the first few months after its foundation there were no fewer than ninety students in residence, drawn from several different dioceses. Many had to leave, however, as fighting became general during the course of the following year and the refugees again flocked to the towns. By the winter of 1948–49, when the situation in the country dioceses was at its worst and the whole parochial organisation threatened to collapse, only twenty-five students remained. With the suppression of the Communist sedition, and the return of some measure of security, the number slowly increased again, and by March, 1950 (when I last visited the seminary), it had risen to thirty-five.

Only three of these students were laymen, sent by their bishops to the seminary for a pre-ordination course—all three were over thirty years of age. The rest were parish clergy, some of whom had been in orders for many years. They had come not only from the diocese of Kozani but from many different districts of northern Greece. The dioceses along the western fringes of Macedonia—Grevena, Kastoria and Florina—were particularly well represented, but there were other

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upon Palaiochori. The people fled to the forest and watched helplessly while the invaders set fire to their homes and slaughtered their animals. When at length they withdrew the whole valley was shrouded in smoke: the incendiaries had done their work only too thoroughly. The church of St. Bessarion—the most prominent building in the village—had been amongst the first to be set on fire. When Papa Costas and a few companions ventured down from the mountainside to make a cautious reconnaissance they found nothing save the blackened walls and a great pile of charred timbers. The school, just below the parish church, was likewise completely gutted, and more than forty of the village's seventy-odd houses were irreparably damaged. The parsonage, a somewhat more substantial edifice than most of its neighbours—a monument to the professional skill of its builder—had resisted the first attempts of the incendiaries, and before the flames had thoroughly obtained a hold Papa Costas and his sons had come scrambling down from amongst the trees, and the building—though badly damaged—was not utterly destroyed. Amongst the smoking ruins of another cottage was found the body of an old woman who had been unable to make good her escape. Every animal in the village had been slaughtered.

After this catastrophe the people of Palaiochori took refuge in Kalambaka—already crammed with refugees from a score of similarly stricken villages—and there, in the shadow of the great rocks, they remained until 1945. In January and February of that year they went back to the village that had become a wilderness. During the first few months after their return home there was tremendous activity at the sawmill and in Papa Costas' workshop. No sooner had a sufficient number of cottages been rendered habitable than the parish priest turned his attention to the church. With the assistance of his elder son and a score of willing if unskilled helpers, the requisite timber was cut and shaped; and soon—though the church was without vestments and Papa Costas had with difficulty been able to procure copies of a few of the most indispensable liturgical books—there was at least a roof to the building and it was no longer necessary for the people to stand for long hours without protection against wind and snow whilst the holy mysteries were celebrated. Then the school was re-roofed, and as summer gave place to autumn the regular pattern of village life began to reassert itself—though Papa Costas no longer had twenty sheep and there were no more than three pack-animals available for the whole community.

But security was short-lived. The following year brought wandering

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159 bands of *andartai* and rumours of terrible deeds wrought in the darkness
793 of long winter nights. In August, 1946, the parish priest of Palaiochori
727 received warning that the Communists planned to murder him as a
669 'traitor'. Papa Costas fled for the second time within less than three years to Kalambaka. There, at the foot of the limestone cliffs crowned by the hermitages of the ascetics of Staghi, he built a little *kalyva*: a wooden cottage consisting of a single room and a large porch.

Before many months had passed, the whole village was back in the comparative security of Kalambaka, and the mountains were given over to the Accursed of God. Papa Costas and his family (all except Leonidas, who had gone off to the wars) settled down in their new house and the younger boy began to attend the overcrowded school. There were many other refugee clergy in the town: not from the diocese of Trikka and Staghi alone but also from many of the villages lying to the north and west of Kalambaka towards the *comopolis* of Grevena.

[465] The second period of exile lasted until October, 1949. As a refugee priest, Papa Costas was entitled to a monthly stipend of 175,000 dr. (the equivalent of a little more than four pounds sterling) and the usual refugee rations of flour, sugar, etc.; but there was no ground to be tilled, no sheep or goats, no fees from baptisms or weddings to supplement the meagre wages of a 'fourth-class priest'. There was, however, some slight measure of security in Kalambaka, with its garrison and its communications, and Papa Costas' wife and daughter wove gaily coloured rugs, and adorned the little house with lace and tins of basil until any craftsman might have rejoiced in his handiwork.

*

The defeat of the Communists at Florina early in 1949 marked the turning point in the seemingly interminable struggle against an enemy who, when defeated, could always withdraw beyond the northern frontiers of Greece to lick his wounds and build up his strength for another assault. During the summer months the wild region that lies to the westwards of Kalambaka was laboriously combed by units of the Greek army, and in October Papa Costas led the first party of returning refugees back to Palaiochori. His daughter and his younger son remained behind, however, in order that the boy might complete his studies at the high school, and it was in Kalambaka in January, 1950, that we first encountered our country parson.

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GRAVE AND DIFFERENT GARMENTS

mean a making—or that the other "Garments and Accoutrements" of the clergy are "very Glorious and different". The widespread devastation of the last few years has left many a village church denuded of its liturgical vestments and other furnishings. 793 292 727

The dioceses of Thrace and eastern Macedonia suffered particularly heavily in this respect at the hands of the Bulgarian bishops and clergy who swarmed into these unhappy provinces in the wake of the German armies. Thus, in the diocese of Alexandroupolis, all the episcopal vestments used by the Metropolitan, the Lord Ioakeim, were stolen by the Bulgarian Metropolitan of Philippopolis; while the cathedral church of St. Nicolas, the church of the Dormition in the Isle of Samothrace, and many village churches, were looted by the Bulgarian clergy. Other dioceses in this part of New Greece suffered no less heavily: the cathedral churches at Siderokastro and Serres (to take two examples at random) being plundered of all their liturgical vestments, as well as the important monasteries of Eikosiphoinisses, in the diocese of Drama, and that of the Prodromos near Serres, to the pillage of which I have already referred. [648]

During the winter of 1949–50, when many of the refugee clergy were returning to their villages after an interval of three years or more, to minister in churches which had been wholly destroyed, or looted and perhaps turned into stables or field-hospitals by the Communists, the Archbishop of Athens appealed to all those parishes of Greece which still possessed anything over and above their essential requirements in liturgical books, vessels, vestments, etc., to come to the aid of those who had been less fortunate than themselves. [669]

The need was great indeed. To the ordinary Greek Christian who worships Sunday by Sunday in his parish church it is but fitting that those who minister in the house of God—which is in truth a heaven upon earth—should be adorned with raiment of a finer and costlier making than suffices for the mere performance of one's daily liturgy, and the absence of the usual accessories of liturgical worship inevitably induces a more acute sense of deprivation than would be felt in similar circumstances by Christians of other traditions.

> In this point [says Dr. Covel] they look askue even upon us English, for not being so Gaudy, Stately and Ceremonious in our Offices as themselves; though we are Episcopally Ordained, and have grave and different Garments for all sorts of our Clergy in their various 793 292 186

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agamos (adj.) unmarried.

agbios saint—commonly used of a bishop.

ambon pulpit.

anagnostes reader.

[669] *andartes* insurgent, rebel. Commonly applied to Communists, who were also known as *katsapliades* and *symmoritai*.

antidoron the blessed bread distributed at end of liturgy.

archegos leader, chief.

artos bread.

azymos unleavened bread.

basilissa queen.

caloyer see *kalogeros*.

catholicon principal church of a monastery.

coenobium, koinobion monastery of the common life.

comopolis a large village.

despotes (pl. *despotades*) master—commonly used of a bishop.

didaskalos (f. *didaskalissa*) teacher in a primary school (the first syllable is commonly omitted).

eikonostasis the screen which supports the holy *eikons*.

ekphonesis something pronounced aloud.

eparchia district, province; often used of a diocese.

ephemerios curate, parish priest.

epitropos one to whom a charge is entrusted, a guardian; commonly used of a churchwarden.

estia literally, a hearth or home; *Christianike estia* is the name often given to the headquarters of the Christian movements of a diocese.

geros old man, ancient.

gymnasion secondary school.

hegoumenos abbot, superior of a monastery (f. *hegoumenissa*).

hierarchia the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy

hierokeryx preacher (lit. 'sacred herald').

hieromonachos monk in holy orders.

igoumenos, igoumenissa see *hegoumenos*.

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GLOSSARY

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kakodoxia heterodoxy

kalogeros monk; literally 'good old man'.

'kalos orisete' welcome!

'kalo taxridi' *bon voyage!*

kalymmafchion clerical hat

kalyva cottage or hut.

kapetanios one who leads (the English 'captain' fails to convey the full meaning of the word).

katbisma in general, a seat or chair. In particular: (*a*) a cell attached to a monastery; (*b*) a division of the psalter—a group of psalms for which one sits down.

katsapliades see *andartes*.

koritsi a young girl.

ktopodi (κτωπόδι) *oktapodi* octopus.

kyrios lord; colloquially Sir, Mr. (f. *kyria*).

latreia worship, service.

lavra a monastery organised somewhat less rigidly than a *coenobium*.

mesochori open space in centre of village.

mesonyktikon the midnight office, mattins.

metanoia, metagnia a prostration.

metousiosis approximate equivalent of transubstantiation.

oikoumene the inhabited world, the Byzantine empire.

orthros the office of the dawn, lauds.

ouzo a white spirit.

paidikos stathmos a sort of day nursery.

paidoupolis institution for children evacuated from dangerous areas during the Communist sedition. [669] [722]

palto overcoat.

Panagbia 'The All-holy': the Virgin Mary.

Pantocrator 'He who governs all things': the Almighty.

papadia priest's wife.

papas married priest (pl. *papades*).

paradosis teaching, tradition.

parekklesion chapel.

phakais (φακαίς) lentils.

phrontisterion training school for clergy, seminary.

pneumatikos spiritual father, confessor.

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[Village Life]

When the second world war came, followed by Italian and German occupation and drastic derangement of the national economy, the situation of the hill villages became truly desperate. Starvation visited many of them.

Famine in time of war was age-old; and the response of the hillsmen of Greece also had very ancient precedent behind it, for they took gun in hand, and attempted to seize forcibly what they could no longer gain peaceably from the plains. They formed the backbone of the wartime ~~resistance forces~~, and justified their violence by patriotism, quite in the spirit their forefathers had shown in attacking the Turks. Yet the resistance movement was not merely a reassertion of old patterns. Its leadership was mainly provided by Communists, who in earlier years had been a small and not very significant group, largely confined to the towns. [1]

In the wartime resistance movement the inhabitants of the hill villages found a sort of economic relief, inasmuch as the guerrilla bands lived by raiding the plains, taking by force a part of the agricultural surplus of those regions in order to feed themselves. A young man, without any real occupation in his native village, and without any hope of a career at home which could satisfy even the traditionally low level of expectation among the hillsmen, could, by joining a guerrilla band, hope to feed himself and relieve his family of the burden of his presence. In addition, he could become a hero, fighting for freedom and liberty, social justice and a better life for all.

For most peasant boys, the ulterior aims of their Communist leaders meant little or nothing. Indeed, the Communists were at very considerable pains to play down any plans they had for social revolution, and welcomed persons of widely differing social views into the ranks of the resistance. This was, of course,

1. There were a number of non-Communist resistance bands also, but most of them did not last long, and the successful ones were confined to Epirus, in the northwest.

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669 thoroughly in harmony with the "popular front" tactics inculcated by international Communist policy. When British intervention in 1944 prevented the resistance forces from seizing power in Greece, the rank and file of those who had supported the Communists during the war had little reason to distrust their leaders, since the Communists had not had time or opportunity to carry through the revolution they hoped for.

669 433 As a result, when in 1946 international Communist policy again mobilized the energies of the Greek Communist party to begin a new guerrilla war, Communist organizers found little difficulty in winning the sympathy and support of the same social groups that had participated in the wartime resistance movement. The hill villages were prepared to send their young men into the guerrilla ranks for the same reasons as before. Liberation had not brought prosperity, and without prosperity in the cities and plains, life in the hills was very hard. Hence the Communists found it easy to create guerrilla bands in all the mountainous regions of the country.

In the most obvious sense, both of these recent guerrilla movements failed. Their leaders were killed or driven from the country, and the government remained in other hands. Yet in another sense, it must be recognized that the imprint of the two guerrilla enterprises upon the attitudes of the hill villages of Greece has been deep, and seems likely to last a long time.

Basically, what the Communists achieved was to convince nearly everyone in the villages that the traditional way of living was no longer even to be wished for and striven after. Instead, they held out fascinating and quite unrealizable dreams of bathtubs and electric refrigerators for all. Or rather, they held this out as an ultimate goal, and offered in the more immediate future a life of activity, violence and dedication — a life that at least seemed to have significance and purpose and hope. These were just what the average young man or woman

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in the hill villages (and in only slightly less degree the other young people of Greece also) lacked, yet desperately needed in order to confront the daily hardships and disappointments of private life. Here, I think, lay and continues to lie the secret of Communist influence in Greece. It was not so much the ultimate vision of wealth and ease and justice – Greek peasants are quite sophisticated enough to distrust such glittering baubles – but the mobilization of energies in the here and now to form a purposeful movement, surcharged with hope and optimism, that attracted the allegiance of so many restless young people.

669 433

At the least it seems correct to say that the guerrilla movements, with their attendant propaganda and real life experiences, created a population more or less chronically open to fresh revolutionary winds, from whatever direction they may blow. Even when jobs on roads and other sorts of construction opened up again in the 1950's, so that something resembling the old symbiosis of hill and plains could be resumed, the changed attitudes among the hillsmen remained quite obvious. Greece will have, for some considerable time to come, a substantial group of its population that is peculiarly receptive to movements of political dissent or outright revolution.

[208] [668]

The real, physical problems presented by too many mouths and too little land have not been solved, and cannot be solved quickly by anything short of wholesale depopulation. But the tradition-bound attitudes which once made this precarious life seem inevitable, even if not right, have been profoundly eroded. Clearly, this is a dangerous and potentially explosive situation. What happens in the hill villages is likely to constitute the critical factor in the future political history of Greece.

The situation in the plains was different. Guerrilla bands seemed suspiciously like robbers, or at best like tax collectors, to the peasants of the plains villages from whom they demanded food. Comparatively few young men left such villages to join

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669 433 the guerrillas, even in the south, where landless families existed in many plains communities. The hard times that drove the hillsmen from home, gun in hand, impelled the plainsmen to stay home where there was food. More recently, the revival and improvement of agriculture naturally proceeded furthest and fastest in regions where the soil was reasonably fertile and abundant. Hence, the plains villagers have been able to achieve far better results than the hillsmen from technical and marketing changes. They have property and social status to defend, and know quite enough about Communist agrarian policy in neighboring countries to distrust beguiling words from Communist lips.

The farmers of the plains are therefore not revolutionary, even though they may grumble about present hardship, and envy others better off than themselves. They have seen quite enough of the violence and suffering which revolutions, or attempted revolutions, involve. The hillsmen, too, have suffered, and do not love violence for its own sake. But, unless I am much mistaken, they remain potential revolutionaries.

Town Life

369 184 Just as the combine and the sickle join in uneasy partnership to harvest the wheat fields of Greece, so also in the towns an age-old style of life is set side by side with a few completely up-to-date factories and the most modern urban amenities. The juxtaposition in an urban context is no less awkward than in the country.

443 369 Particularly in the north, where Turkish times are still within living memory, in towns like Jannina or Kozani, one can see streets where artisans pursue their trades in little shops just as their predecessors have done for centuries. The old medieval principle still holds, whereby shops dealing in the same goods

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sions, only to remember how precious a job is to every Greek, 466
and how impossible it is for a man to throw up a position in dis- 557
gust in the hope of finding another and better one. There are, 476
however, other factors which make the position of wage and salary earners difficult, and foster chronic discontent among them.

Wages are low, and are constantly in danger of being under- 464
cut by young men coming from the villages in search of work. [465]
Such new arrivals can often afford to work for less than a regular urban resident, for they have no homes or families to maintain, and can, in summer at least, sleep outdoors and eat very little in order to save a small sum with which to return home in the fall. As a result, a large part of the building trades, for example, is in the hands of migrant labor. Unions can do little to [467]
improve wages or working conditions when dozens of applicants seek every job that opens, and are ready, if need be, to bid against one another in order to get employment at all. More- 565
over, the prestige accorded to white-collar work and to immu- 578
nity from manual toil obviously puts the working class at a psy- 669
chological disadvantage, and builds up a sense of grievance [554]
among those condemned to labor with their hands.

Like the hills villagers, the workingmen of the towns were [208]
deeply infiltrated by Communist propaganda during the second world war. Attacks upon the rich, as traitors to the nation and oppressors of the poor, won widespread response. And indeed, the conduct of the small group of wealthy men in Greece lent some color to the accusations which Communists launched against them. Most men of property felt it more vital to safeguard their possessions than to join in any active resistance to [609]
the German and Italian authorities. Many of them exhibited the same ruthlessness against everyone beyond the family circle that most Greeks exhibit, and did so even when people were actually starving in the streets, as they were in 1941. Acts of

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565 578 669 generosity and kindliness did something to redeem the balance, but were comparatively rare. The wealthy classes did not, as a rule, show much sign of social conscience or sense of obligation to the poor. Once again, the solidarity and exclusiveness of family sentiment interfered with larger loyalties and sympathies. The result was that antagonism between rich and poor broke out into the open during the war years, and has never since ceased to trouble the political stability of the country.

458 465 578 Economic conditions have been acting, for at least fifteen years, to sharpen this feeling. Since 1941 Greece has experienced a series of monetary inflations that raised prices, sometimes rapidly, sometimes more slowly, but always faster than adjustments were made in wage and salary scales. As prices outran wages, workingmen faced a series of crises, the more serious because their wage rates were low to begin with. Adjustments of wages, when they came, relieved the problem only temporarily until continuing inflation once again robbed the currency of part of its purchasing power.

The economic plight of white-collar employees was nearly the same as that of manual workingmen, for they, too, had to live on an income that regularly lagged behind the price level. [554] Moreover, the fact that such persons had gone to school, and therefore felt they had a rightful claim to superior social status, did not make it easier for them to face a life of poverty. The fierce struggle to win a place in the government civil service was only matched by the chronic discontent of those who had succeeded in getting government jobs and then found that they could scarcely live on their salaries.

578 669 [565] Fortunately for the political stability of the country, wage earners and salaried classes are a minority in Greece. This is no more than a corollary of the small size and family character of most Greek economic undertakings. Nevertheless, if one adds the hillsmen of the countryside as a third more or less chroni-

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cally disaffected class, there emerges a formidable grouping of unstable and potentially revolutionary elements in present-day Greek society. The more conservative groups – farmers of the plains villages, shopkeepers, traders and property owners in the towns, and the handful of rich shipowners and other large capitalists – certainly outweigh the dissidents in normal times. But times have seldom been normal in recent Greek history, and the balance of forces has not uniformly inclined in favor of the established social order.

Public Life in 1947

The winter and spring of 1946–47 were months when the balance turned strongly against conservatism. As a matter of fact, Greece seemed then to teeter on the verge of Communist revolution. The Greek Communist party, acting in concert with the Communist governments and parties of neighboring countries to the north, and with the approval or perhaps under the instructions of the Russians, began to raise guerrilla bands in the mountains of Greece in the summer of 1946. Organizers met with rather quick response in many hill villages, where the young men and boys were stewing in their discontent and welcomed the high hopes held out to them by Communist promises. The national army was quite unable to check the spread of the guerrilla movement. For one thing, morale was uncertain. Many soldiers felt strong distaste for fighting fellow Greeks. When sallies were made from strong points which the army had constructed, the guerrillas simply melted away, only to reappear a few days later somewhere else, soon to return to the same district as before.

The morale of the government was equally uncertain. Communist lands were very near; Britain was embarrassed by financial difficulties; the United States was far away. No one was

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669 sure that aid would come, or if it came that it would arrive soon
648 enough and in large enough quantity to turn the tide. Yet for-
433 eign aid was clearly needed if the Communist guerrillas were to be stopped. Without it, the government could scarcely hope to maintain its army for long. More than that, the fabric of the civil economy could not stand by itself, especially when guerrilla raids and road mines made transport and communication unsafe.

727 Apart from the military and diplomatic aspects, there was
648 another and more fundamental sense in which the morale of the government and of the conservative classes was damaged. The general ideas and presuppositions of the non-Communist politicians and their supporters were badly shaken by the course of events in the immediate postwar period. Their general assumption had been that once the Germans had withdrawn and a transition period of special emergency had been passed through, then the society and economy of Greece would return of themselves to something like stability and the prewar pattern. Yet now the Germans had departed, UNRRA had come and gone (save for a small rear guard), and still there was no stability and no security. Far less was there any prospect of prosperity.

The upheaval of the war years had in fact been too drastic to permit any automatic return to normal. But the political lead-
[661] ers of the country, all of whom had grown up in a world where government economic policy and administration were conceived in terms of doing favors for one's friends and withholding them from one's opponents, had no idea how to cope with the disturbed and unhappy society entrusted to their guidance. No idea, that is, except to ask for help from Britain or the United States.

[665] The politicians could scarcely be accused of not having done their part to bring things back to normal. During the brief res-

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665 whom to fight, and a hope for the future. None of the old-line
727 political parties or leaders could do any of these things nearly so effectively.

665 Only the inner circle of the Greek Communist party was di-
669 rectly affected by the very real fissure between what may be called "home grown" and "Russian" Communists. The rank and file of party members and sympathizers were perhaps scarcely aware of any such tensions, and accepted without any special notice the transfer of authority over the Greek Communist party from the hands of George Siantos, who had led it during the war years, to those of Nicholas Zachariades, who had spent the war in a German concentration camp. Yet this shift, accomplished in May 1945, represented the assertion of control by leaders trained and directed by Moscow, as against the more independent "home grown" leadership which Siantos had embodied.

In any case, this fissure was only of potential importance. If Russian policy should diverge seriously from lines acceptable to "home grown" Communists, then the factions in the Greek Communist party might be expected to come into the open. So long as no such divergence appeared – and in 1946 and 1947 it did not – the only consequence was to elevate some persons to positions of authority in the party and to blight the careers of others who had thrown in their lot with the defeated side.

665 Hence, in 1946 and 1947 the advantages enjoyed by the Greek
669 Communist party in competition with its rivals were actual, its
648 weaknesses only potential. This was true not only within the
727 country, but internationally as well. The Communist countries to the north began actively assisting the Greek Communist bands, sending arms and ammunition, allowing hard-pressed units to find refuge across the border, and providing hospital and other services to them as far as geographical difficulties permitted. On the other hand, British military and economic

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support for the Greek government was about to be withdrawn, and it was not yet clear that American support would be forthcoming to replace the British. Under the circumstances it is not strange that the Communists went from strength to strength, while their opponents were filled with foreboding for the future.

To be sure, the Communists faced one great obstacle. Their opponents were still in full control of the administrative machine of government. The pattern so successfully followed in eastern European countries which fell within the Russian sphere of influence, whereby Communists first acquired a toehold in the administration and then used their position to push all rivals out, could scarcely be employed in Greece. The police, army and civil bureaucracy were all firmly in anti-Communist hands. British armed intervention in 1944 had been necessary to secure this state of affairs, but it was confirmed by elections held in 1946; and the new aggressiveness of international Communist policies did not permit patient waiting until some future election might lead to a coalition including Communist ministers.

Yet the effectiveness of these instruments of power was sadly blunted in Greece. In the countryside the police were too few to resist concerted attack by guerrilla bands. The army was numerous enough, but the morale of the soldiers made offensive actions against the guerrillas difficult and largely ineffective. The civil bureaucracy was distinguished by its clumsiness and occasional corruption. Efforts to prevent corruption led to excessive centralization, so that even simple decisions had constantly to be referred to Athens, and not infrequently to a cabinet member, before action could be taken. The nomarchs, the principal local officials in the provinces, characteristically spent more time in Athens, haunting the central offices of the government in hope of getting needed decisions, money or supplies, than they did in the districts assigned to them. Incidentally, of course, they could thereby consolidate personal rela-

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Under the circumstances, then, nothing like an efficient administration confronted the Communist challenge. Private citizens, who were unable to get satisfaction from officials, even when they knew their claims were right and just, were not encouraged to feel any special loyalty to the regime; and a government which was able to do so little to remedy the general disorganization of economic and social life gave color to the Communists' claim that they and they alone could solve the country's problems. 647 727 433

There were, nevertheless, some persons who were attempting to devise plans for the economic and social stabilization of the country. Some held government positions, some were unemployed or semi-employed engineers and the like. Perhaps the most influential circle was that associated with the UNRRA Mission to Greece, which, in addition to delivering relief supplies to the country, had attempted to rehabilitate the nation as well. The time and the funds allocated to UNRRA proved grossly inadequate to rehabilitate Greece, but studies and plans made by UNRRA, to discover what could and should be done to put the country back on its feet, had at least the virtue of turning some men's minds to the long-term problem. Some of these plans, and some of the personnel that helped draw them up, later played a part in the United States aid program. 185 727 433 648

Apart from this historical connection, one can say that even in the darkest days of 1947, when Communist victory seemed far from improbable, there did exist on the fringes of Greek official life a small number of persons who had begun to think in terms that might effectively meet the Communist challenge. Planners and statisticians, engineers and economists – men who conceived the task of the government to include efforts to shape economic and social development in such a fashion as to relieve the poverty of the nation – did exist. They were, however, far removed from the real centers of power and authority in the 185 727 433 669

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[Public Life in 1947]

government. Unassisted, they would certainly not have been able to do anything effective to overcome the Communist menace.

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To sum up: The nature of Greek society and the shortcomings of the Greek government, together with the constellation of international relations in 1946 and 1947, made Communist revolution possible, indeed probable. But the injection of a massive new force, United States aid, changed the direction of events and prevented that consummation. The activity of the American aid missions will therefore be the subject of the next chapter.

[648]

[PP 33-84 not Processed]

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Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

than 400 stremmata of cultivated land. Presumably the owner had divided legal title among relatives or friends without surrendering real control of his land.) 423

The village is very small. In 1956 its population was only 130,[1] yet it occupies no less than 6,000 acres, excluding the absentee landowner's estate, which is counted as part of the lands of Lofiscos by official government reckoning. This amounts to more than 46 acres per capita; and even though more than half of the land remains rough pasture, subject to flooding for part of every year, such an abundance of land represents solid wealth by Greek peasant standards. And indeed, the village is wealthy. Farmers find little difficulty in accumulating gold sovereigns with which to dower their daughters, for wheat is always in demand and a government purchase scheme keeps the price stable and well above world market levels. In spite of the shabby appearance of their houses and the untidy appearance of their clothes, the families of Lofiscos are, by their own standards, very well off. Almost all of them probably have several hundred gold sovereigns hidden away, but this no stranger could ever expect to know. 621 423 [162] [161] 621 511 [435] [454]

The tribulations of the second world war, of the occupation and of the guerrilla war made almost no impression on Lofiscos. The young men served in the army, of course, and saw something of the outer world. But on their return they seemed to fit back smoothly into the familiar routine. As the guerrillas never 621 178x 669

1. This and all subsequent figures for village populations are rough approximations. Village records do not include any sort of census figure. They are confined to registration of births, marriages and deaths, and the most important function they serve is to provide the basis for the annual call-up of military recruits. Moreover, a family often remains registered in a village long after it has moved away; in such instances births and deaths are likely to be omitted from the village books, and may or may not be recorded elsewhere. One must therefore depend upon informal estimates of village officials. This leaves a considerable margin for error, unless the officials consulted are unusually careful. [659] [217]

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Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

penetrated so far into the heart of the Thessalian plain, the villagers saw nothing of them at first hand. Life went on smoothly, and the market for wheat was good. In general, then, the tenor of life in Lofiscos is a thoroughly conservative one. In 1920 the villagers attained their hearts' desire – possession of the land; and since then nothing has happened to make them wish to change the way they live.

The general conservatism of the village is reflected in the caution with which the farmers have taken up new techniques and ideas. There was no pressing economic necessity to impel them to experiment. Familiar methods and crops did well enough. Yet there are at present real signs of technical change. In 1952 fertilizer came in for the first time. Up till then no one in the village had used it. In that year, a representative of the Agricultural Bank visited the village, and urged the farmers to buy fertilizer on credit. A few of them made the experiment; the results they achieved convinced all the rest, for with fertilizer the wheat crop was nearly twice what had been usual before. Every farmer is now using fertilizer, and the net production of the fields is rising accordingly.

Then in 1956 a single farmer, more venturesome than his fellows, contracted a five-year loan with the Agricultural Bank in order to install a well and pump with which to irrigate four acres. This represented a far greater departure from custom than the use of fertilizer. Wheat does not need irrigation in Thessaly, and to repay the cost of the well and pump new crops had to be introduced. Cotton was the answer, and the results in 1956, when I visited the village, were already so promising that several other farmers were planning to install a well-pump irrigation system in their fields, and grow cotton the next year. By doing so they can multiply their cash yield per acre several times as compared to the traditional income from wheat farming. This prospect is all the farmers need to persuade them to go ahead.

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Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

The smallness of the original farms and the large size of most families in Nea Eleftherohori began, even in the late 1930's, to present the villagers with a very serious problem. What were their children going to do? To divide the land was a desperate solution, inasmuch as the farms were already near the minimum that a single family could subsist upon. Somehow or other, all but one son had to be freed from the land, find some other form of livelihood, and leave the entire farm to be inherited by one brother. Hopeless poverty if not outright hunger was the certain lot of everyone who stayed on a divided inheritance. [3]

Nea Eleftherohori has been less fortunate than Lofiscos in still another respect. Situated at the foot of Mount Olympus, it lay just on the edge of the territory that guerrilla bands controlled in 1943–45 and again in 1947–49. These were, therefore, years of intense political insecurity in the village, and some loss of life. In 1947 the guerrillas organized a raid upon Nea Elef-

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the new generation? If so, why not in Nea Eleftherohori? To be sure, that village pursued a more nearly subsistence style of agriculture between the wars; but this fact by itself does not seem enough to explain the contrast. Perhaps the prevalence of early marriages in Nea Eleftherohori, consequent upon the mode of land distribution in 1927, accounts for the difference, early marriages naturally bringing larger families; or perhaps some recklessness engendered by the catastrophic upheaval which the Asia Minor refugee population underwent encouraged large families, for there is in Nea Eleftherohori, as in all of Greece, a noticeable differential in birth rate between refugee and "old settler" groups, with the refugees standing higher.

3. In legal form, the Greek government retained title to all the land distributed to refugees and squatters after World War I. Part of the original justification for this policy was that it would permit the government to prevent excessive subdivision of peasant farms; and it was still the case in 1956 that legal tenure of each allotment was lodged in a single family head. This, however, did not prevent some families from dividing the allotments in practice among the heirs. Yet the fact that such divisions could not be legalized may perhaps have reinforced the reluctance of the families of Nea Eleftherohori to make them.

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Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

621 therohori and plundered an UNRRA storehouse which had
669 been set up there. This was bad enough from the point of view
578 of the villagers; but what was far more awkward was the fact that sentiment was seriously divided within the village itself. Approximately half the population sympathized more or less completely with the guerrillas, and in 1947–48 about twenty young men and women from the village fought in their ranks. Only three of them returned. In 1947, when I first visited Nea Eleftherohori, the atmosphere was exceedingly tense. No one was quite sure of his neighbor, and no one was sure whether the government or the guerrillas would win in the end. Armed men patrolled the village at night on behalf of the government, and felt free to pay disconcerting calls upon families known or believed to be sympathetic with the guerrillas. Fifteen persons were arrested by the nearby gendarmes after the raid of 1947, and one of them was executed; the rest returned only after two and a half years of detention. The general mood of the village at that time was one of fear and frustration. No one could see any solution to the difficulties of the present, still less those of the future. What could the young boys do who were not needed at home? With no land available in the village, and no jobs obtainable in town, the situation seemed nearly hopeless.

By 1956 the outlook had changed. First of all, the political division within the village had healed over, leaving almost no trace. The renewed solidarity of village feeling dated from 1950, when the president and council of the community – who, as appointees of the Ministry of Interior, were of course leading anti-Communists – asked the local police to release two of the village boys who had returned from serving with the guerrillas and had been arrested on general suspicion. The police acted favorably upon this request, and allowed their prisoners to go free without further punishment. This affair, which showed a degree of magnanimity on the part of the anti-Communist lead-

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Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

ers of the village since a son of one of them had been caught and killed in a guerrilla ambush near the village during the war, inaugurated a new era in Nea Eleftherohori. Everyone felt relieved that old feuds were not to be pursued, and made haste to forget the quarrels that had so long divided the village.

More important, or at least more promising for the long run, was that after 1950 the villagers began to see some hope of a solution to their long-range difficulties. This hope was based on two innovations. They began to send nearly all their younger sons to secondary school, hoping thereby to qualify them for jobs in town, away from the land. And they began to intensify their farming and to increase their cash income by raising market crops on a far greater scale than before.

The path to higher education was greatly facilitated by the proximity of a gymnasium (i.e., a "classical" high school), located in a large village about ten miles away. A bus service was instituted between Nea Eleftherohori and the school, enabling boys from the village to attend classes and still live at home. Since there were no tuition fees, secondary school education became comparatively cheap; though even so, the cost of books and other supplies was, for many families, a serious matter. By 1956 no fewer than thirty-six boys from Nea Eleftherohori were attending the gymnasium. This number included almost every boy of appropriate age who had an elder brother, that is, almost every boy who would not inherit a farm. Roughly one third of all the families of the village had a boy in the gymnasium.

Since 1950, a number of changes in farming methods have also occurred. The first was the use of fertilizer. A few farmers had experimented with it before the war, but it cost so much that they found that in a year of bad or only middling weather they could not make enough on the extra yield of their fields to pay off the debt incurred to buy it. Hence use of fertilizer was abandoned, to be resumed only in 1950. By 1956 "everybody"

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[Villages of the Plains]

*178 of older peasant customs. The dowry has always been a part of
582 marriage customs in Greece, but it used to be relatively small
583 and easily within the means of the average family. Moreover, not to marry off one's daughters at a rather early age – before twenty-two or so – was regarded as a disgrace. It was felt that something must be wrong, either with the girl or with her parents; that she was running a grave risk of immorality and consequent loss of reputation; and that the parents were delinquent in their duty if they failed to marry her off in the bloom of her youth. Because the new customs run contrary to these older attitudes, a very special tension exists among the farmers of Nea Eleftherohori. They feel it is wrong that their young people cannot marry when they should; they feel even more strongly that marriages must wait until the means of livelihood are assured. This requires the new dowry and land inheritance pattern. But no one is happy with the way the system has worked out, particularly the young people themselves, who see a long and dreary time of waiting ahead before they can hope to start families of their own.

*178 This discontent is compounded by the feeling, which seems
369 very strong in the village, that people in the towns have the best of everything: less work, more income; less boredom, more excitement. City standards of dress and manners have made extraordinary inroads in recent years, and aspiration toward a more comfortable and less laborious life is very strong.

*178 Consequently, although by economic criteria the village is
621 very much better off than before, and although the political
●669 tensions within the village have sunk back into insignificance,
433 discontent is much alive and near the surface. It no longer takes political form as it did during and immediately after the war, when the Communists appealed to, and found a response among, many of the young people. As long as the majority of families in the village continue to see a path by which they

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Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

may expect to maintain or modestly increase the standard of living they have enjoyed hitherto, it is likely that discontent will remain personal and private. As yet, hard work, saving and waiting seem to promise a solution; and with such hope present discontents seem bearable. But if some day the hopes turn out to have been in vain, then one may expect to see an active movement of political dissent and revolt appear in Nea Eleftherohori once more.

As compared with Lofiscos, therefore, Nea Eleftherohori is a good deal farther along the path toward a new social and psychological adjustment of village life. The less spacious economic base from which Nea Eleftherohori started compelled an earlier and more energetic adoption of new agricultural techniques; the old-fashioned frame in which the peasant family and community flourished from time immemorial has largely been transformed or discarded; and city standards have come in, not so much in fact as in aspiration.

PALEO CORINTHOS

Paleo Corinthos, or Old Corinth, stands on the site of the ancient city, on the isthmus between the Corinthian and Saronic gulfs. The imposing mass of Acrocorinth, crowned by extensive and well-preserved Venetian fortifications, dominates the village, whereas the ruins from classical times are comparatively inconspicuous. The modern town of Corinth lies on the shore some five miles off, and has taken over the commercial functions once centered in the ancient city. Until very recently, Old Corinth remained the mere village it had been in Turkish times.

It is, however, a much larger village than either Lofiscos or Nea Eleftherohori. Its population was officially reckoned to be 1,530 in 1947; by 1956 the figure had grown to 1,850. This growth was only partly due to natural increase, for the village

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Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

Particularly fortunate conditions in Old Corinth – tourism, irrigation, the proximity to the Athens market, and the effective leadership of the village president – have permitted the villagers to maintain their old family customs almost unchanged, and in spite of the rapid growth of population which such customs entail, they have not had to sacrifice their standard of living. Instead, living conditions have improved, with electricity, tractors and the like.

This is a situation very rare in Greece. It makes Old Corinth the happiest village I visited, a community at peace with itself and with the world, mildly surprised by the prosperity that has descended upon it, and generally well content with the way things are going. The contrast is strong with the internal condition of the village in 1947, when, like Nea Eleftherohori, the community was sharply divided between left and right. In 1947, indeed, the bitterness between the two political parties was far deeper than in Nea Eleftherohori, for in Old Corinth the political lines were drawn, more or less exactly, between farmers and landless men, that is, between buyers and sellers of labor. Two particularly squalid "political" murders occurred within the village in the last days of the German occupation; and the Communist-inspired regime, which lasted for a few months in 1944, aroused strong revulsion among the substantial farmers. These memories now seem almost forgotten, though the sense of solidarity between rich and poor in Old Corinth is by no means so strong as the community feeling among the villagers of Nea Eleftherohori, where everybody is nearly equal economically.

The inequalities in landholding, and the existence of a fairly numerous landless class in the village, certainly constitute a potential source of trouble. If currant and tomato prices should fall, or if more migrants from the hills should come to the village and push wages down by competing for jobs in the fields, the existing harmony and general satisfaction could easily

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boundaries that existed before 1881, village life has not suffered drastic upheaval since 1821, if then. Changes have come slowly and by evolution. The case is far otherwise in New Greece – Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus and Thrace. There the violent elimination of Turkish landlords and peasants through war was followed by governmental creation of egalitarian peasant communities. This amounted to an agrarian revolution from above, in some cases fully satisfying the peasants – as in Lofiscos – but often failing to do so, as in Nea Eleftherohori.

The slower evolution of village life in Old Greece has meant, at least until the present, the preservation of a fairly firm cake of custom, governing the daily lives of the inhabitants. In this respect, Old Corinth is quite typical. Consequently, in spite of the contrast between rich peasant and landless laborer, the social stratification within these peasant communities has not bred so many revolutionists as have been bred by the hardships of life in an equality of poverty, characteristic of many villages in the north. Conservatism, royalism, traditionalism have all centered in the south; while radicalism, republicanism, restlessness and revolution have found their strongest expression in the north.

Yet while these generalizations are true, I must hasten to add that the villages of the plains never were the main centers of political revolt. Too many had too much to lose in such communities. Rather it was in the hill villages, where life was harder and the prospect of maintaining a given standard of life was dimmer, that revolution found its most congenial ground. Since the latter part of the eighteenth century, if not before, this has been the really vulnerable point in Greek society, the source of major disturbance and of recurrent civil violence. In the hills, even more than in the plains, the future stability or instability of Greek society is likely to be decided in time to come, as it has in times past. Let us therefore leave the plains and turn to the hills.

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KOTTA

621 Kotta is situated in the far northwestern corner of Greece,
[361] about five miles from the Albanian border, and not more than fifteen miles from the point where Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece adjoin. Flowing past the village is a small stream which
[133] in due course descends to join the Aliakmon River. The valley
[311] slopes are steep, and the villagers possess only 500 stremmata (125 acres) of arable soil. Much of this is thin patches on the hillsides; of good bottom land the community has less than ten acres.

722 When I visited the village in 1947, the inhabitants were starv-
669 ing. Seemingly innumerable children peeped out from every
[731] house, many of them showing bloated bellies beneath motley rags that served as clothing but scarcely covered their nakedness. The village was then in the hands of the guerrillas, who had stationed a detachment of fifteen boys (the eldest was not
[191] more than eighteen) in the community. The ordinary speech was Slavic, and at least some of the villagers felt that it would
[619] be better for them if their village belonged to Yugoslav Macedonia. Macedonian national feeling may have played some part in this attitude, but probably the major determinant was the knowledge that conditions across the border were not quite so hard as those they faced in Greece.

The people of Kotta were, indeed, living under war condi-
[491] tions. The Greek army had blocked the main road between Florina and Kastoria, which runs not far from the village site, and no vehicles could pass without special permits; men could still get through on foot by taking off across open country, but there was little incentive to do so. Work could not be found
[464] down in the plains, and a man from Kotta, with the trace of a Slavic accent in his Greek, was courting arrest or a beating if he

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ventured into territory controlled by the Greek army or police. Resentment against the Greek authorities was widespread, although one man in the village, in speaking to me privately, made it clear that he at least did not like to contribute to the upkeep of the guerrilla garrison that controlled the village.

The population of the village was 630 persons, of whom over 200 were under fifteen years of age. Thus there was about one fifth of an acre of agricultural land per head, land that was miserably poor to begin with. Clearly the village could not live on its agriculture; and even when it had been safe to graze sheep on the barren mountain slopes, as it was not in 1947, the village still could not begin to maintain itself on local resources. The villagers calculated that they could produce food for about four months in the year; the deficit had to be made good outside.

In prewar years two means had been found to make ends meet. The men of the village were accomplished masons, and traveled far and wide over Greece seeking work as builders. In addition, they found work in various sorts of heavy construction – road building, irrigation works and the like. But in 1947 such jobs were not to be had, at least not by men with a Slavic accent.

The second, and perhaps more important, resource was remittances from abroad. The village had begun to send men overseas, mainly to Canada and Australia, even before the first world war. During the interwar years, the migration had continued despite growing barriers to free movement. In Toronto, Canada, and in Sydney, Australia, natives of Kotta had founded regular little colonies, and the members of these emigrant groups, all of whom were related to one another in some degree, helped to finance the continued emigration. Each family expected to send at least one son overseas, and that son was in turn expected to send back enough of his earnings to keep his parents fed and clothed, and to help out his brothers and sisters who stayed home.

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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

who stayed home. When the Greek army interrupted communication with the outside world this vital supply of cash was cut off. In 1947, therefore, the villagers were trying to spread out four months' food over the twelve months of the year.

Their diet was cornbread and little else. Nearly all of their sheep, whose milk had once helped to correct the deficiencies of a maize diet, had been slaughtered during the occupation; and the prevalence of skin diseases and a certain lassitude in their movements clearly indicated that malnutrition was added to undernourishment. They missed salt more acutely than anything else. There had been none in the village for several weeks when I was there.

Kotta remained in guerrilla hands until August 1949. It was luckier than some of its neighboring communities inasmuch as there was no fighting in the immediate environs, so that the houses of the village escaped without more than casual damage. But the villagers could not escape from famine, nor from disease that naturally followed in the wake of prolonged and drastic undernourishment. When I returned in 1956, the population of the village had shrunk to 188, less than one third of what it had been in 1947. The average number of persons per family had declined to 2.4, whereas in 1947 families with fewer than three children were a rarity and five or six children per family was closer to the average.

About one hundred of the former inhabitants of the village were simply missing. They had gone off, in desperation, looking for food or safety and had not come back. Most, presumably, had died or been killed. In addition, the village priest said that about fifty of the village men were known to have been killed while serving with the guerrillas; and five families had moved west across the Albanian frontier in 1949 when the guerrilla retreat took place. But the largest single factor in the decline of population was the removal of the village children by the guer-

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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

rillas. A total of 225 children, between the ages of two and twelve, had been taken north in the early stages of the war, and only three had returned. A few letters had come from some of them, originating in places as remote as Turkestan, Poland and Czechoslovakia; but most had not been heard from, and no one in the village knew whether they were alive or dead.

The evacuation of the village children may well have been conceived by the guerrilla authorities as a humanitarian measure. Considering the state of the village as I saw it in 1947, such an interpretation seems quite plausible. This was not the way the bereft parents viewed the matter, however. They gave no very coherent explanation of why the children were taken, but the abduction was remembered in 1956 as the greatest crime the guerrillas committed. Not a few parents have been left childless, and this, by traditional village standards, is a bitter disaster. Who will look after them in their old age?

Still another factor in the drastic depopulation of Kotta has been emigration. As soon as communications with the outside world became possible again, relatives rallied round in Toronto and Sydney, and helped a total of fifty-six persons to emigrate. The process is still going on. When I visited the village in 1956, a young man and his mother were on the verge of departure for Australia, where they would join cousins who were financing the voyage.

Yet in spite of the sorrows which have visited every family in the village, and in spite of the terrible suffering all have been through, the spirit of the village in 1956 seemed amazingly relaxed and calm – almost happy. The survivors gave the impression of being profoundly surprised to find themselves still alive. But what is more important, everyone now has enough to eat. The village land can feed the population; there is now no need to look for work outside; and remittances from abroad permit some families to indulge in small luxuries – kerosene lamps, for example.

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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

corn for human food grows better than in almost any other spot. To replace human with animal food on such land is a considerable sacrifice – too much of a sacrifice if the population of the village should once again begin to grow.

As things are today, the villagers lead a very leisurely life. Work in the fields takes at most three months of the year. There is no need of outside work, and no one attempts to find it. For nine months of the year, consequently, the men have plenty of time on their hands. They use it in sitting around the village and talking. Their talk is easy and friendly. Men who fought on opposite sides in the guerrilla war could joke about it without any trace of bitterness. As a matter of fact, many of the survivors had fought on both sides, first with the guerrillas and then with the Greek army. Those who stayed with the guerrillas were killed, or else disappeared into Albania. Except for the loss of their children, there seems no inclination to blame the guerrillas for what happened; nor is there any perceptible hostility against the Greek government. The general feeling about the war is that it was all an absurd nightmare in which the villagers themselves were no more than victims, rather than participants. As Slavs, the villagers cannot easily share Greek nationalism, and Communist ideas and ideals seem to have left no impression upon them. Presumably, the few who took those ideas seriously departed with the retreating guerrilla army. For those who remain, the vision of Sydney or Toronto means far more than any ideological paradise.

One of the most surprising changes in Kotta is the prevalence of Greek as the normal and natural speech, for communication among the villagers themselves as well as with strangers. "We are all Greek now," one of the young men said, and explained that both in the guerrilla and in the regular army, the language and sentiment had been Greek. Only the old people of the village speak Slav any more, he said. Even more to the point, the

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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

community where very early marriages have been the rule, a woman of thirty or thirty-five is already old.) Between 1952 and 1956 there were only four marriages in the village, twelve births, sixteen deaths. Under the circumstances, it seems certain that the population will decrease still further in the immediate future.

Yet even four or five families could turn out to be quite enough to repopulate the village, if the old patterns of early marriage and numerous children prevail. Indeed, the close blood relationships of all the villagers suggests that in times past the community may well have contained only a handful of families from whom hundreds (or, counting those overseas, thousands) in due course descended. Thanks to the depopulation brought by the guerrilla war, the traditional life of Kotta has become easy once again, and if the young people accept the old ways, and do not allow the glitter of urban life overseas, reflected in the letters and money orders sent back by friends and relatives, to change their outlook, then it seems fairly certain that within a decade or less the depopulation of the village will come to a halt, and rapid growth in numbers will begin once more. If so, after something like thirty or forty years Kotta will probably be back in the impossible position of 1947.

This cycle is, I believe, the key to much Balkan history. The peasant family system was adjusted, from age-old antiquity, to supply large numbers of children, most of whom died from violence or disease before attaining adulthood. With the more or less effective pacification of the countryside in the last couple of centuries, together with the elimination of some epidemic diseases and the control of others, this age-old balance was thrown out of kilter, so that the peasant population began (as early as the mid-eighteenth century) to run far ahead of the development of resources that might sustain it.

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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

175 In politics, the result was a series of risings against the lords
669 of the plains, which centered in the marginal hill villages. Un-
619 til 1912, the lords of the Macedonian plains were of course Turks, and Greek nationalism (like other Balkan nationalisms) was therefore able with perfect propriety to combine territorial expansion with social revolution, and pit hill against plain in the name of individual freedom and national self-determination. The first clear example of this phenomenon was the Greek War of Independence of 1821–30. The long series of revolts and irregular wars of the nineteenth century in the European dominions of the Ottoman Empire continued the process; and the guerrilla movements in Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece during (and in Greece after) the second world war were only its latest manifestations. In this most recent period, however, the lords of the plains were not Turks any longer, and were not even landlords. Instead they were fellow peasants and co-nationals. The difference was cloaked during World War II by the fact that Germans and Italians were in the plains, and to attack them served to justify the far more genuine assault upon the plains villages – from which, after all, the major food supply of the guerrilla forces had to come. Only in Greece, between 1946 and 1949, did the divergence between nationalism and social revolution become clear; and even in that instance, as pointed out above, most guerrillas felt themselves to be Greek patriots as well.

621 Kotta's wartime experience shows dramatically how such
161 warfare brought its own solution to the problem of overpopula-
433 tion – cruel, blind, bloody, but effective. Depopulation, such as Kotta suffered, certainly sufficed to solve for a generation or so the problem of too many mouths and not enough land. When the crisis passed, survivors could settle back to a more or less satisfactory life again, until their growing numbers should once more make the traditional style of life impossible within the

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terracing, attempted no planting of fruit trees or of vines, and in general refused to borrow any of the traditional and very effective methods of Greek Mediterranean agriculture, even though there are villages on the other side of Mount Pelion, within less than two hours' walking distance, where these methods have been in use for centuries on land intrinsically no better than that of the Cherasia hillsides. (There is one important difference, however: because Cherasia's land faces north, toward the open Thessalian plain, cold winter winds blow across it and make olive cultivation impossible. But olive cultivation is and has always been the backbone of Mediterranean hillside agriculture. This undoubtedly is the reason why settlers from over the mountain never tried to exploit Cherasia's hillsides, leaving them to shepherds for winter pasture.)

The upshot of the history and traditions of Cherasia was that even before World War II, a thoroughly revolutionary mood prevailed in the village. The poor – which is to say nearly everybody in the village except the three families – felt the need to find a scapegoat for what was happening to them. They despised but also envied the three "rich" families, and felt that it would no more than serve them right to be plundered of all they had gained. The villagers also held the government and all other persons in authority vaguely responsible for the straits in which they found themselves. They could not help casting greedy eyes upon rich villages like Lofiscos, which lies within sight of Cherasia, a scant twenty miles across the flat Thessalian plain. But unlike most Greek villagers, they did not really want agricultural land; plunder was more in line with the tradition of the community.

The Communist-led guerrilla movement of World War II therefore found unusually ready and unanimous support in Cherasia. No one was willing to tell me how many men from

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the village joined the resistance during the occupation period; but my guess is that practically every able-bodied man took part at some time or other in guerrilla actions, even though some of the villagers remained ostensibly civilian. A consequence was that in 1943 a German expedition burnt all the houses of the upper village and made it uninhabitable. The people of Cherasia, fortunately, saw them coming and had time to escape over the mountain.

The "liberation" of Greece in 1944 brought no liberation to Cherasia. Quite the contrary, it interfered with the process by which armed men from the village had been able during the occupation to get grain and other goods from the plains. Consequently, when three men appeared on Mount Pelion in 1946 and summoned the young men of the village to take arms again, the response was immediate. When I visited the village in 1947, a guerrilla band, some thirty strong, was encamped in the ruins of the upper village. A detachment descended each evening to gather supplies from the inhabitants of the lower village and from other villages out in the plain. Most of the members of the band were sons of families living in lower Cherasia, although the leaders of the band came from elsewhere.

During the day, the Greek army, from a strong point in a neighboring plains village, took possession of Cherasia. Each morning a patrol of soldiers came to the village and demanded to know who had been collaborating with the guerrillas; each evening the guerrillas came down from the mountain and demanded to know who had been helping the soldiers. Under the circumstances, life was difficult, to say the least. The army sometimes beat those suspected of sympathizing with the guerrillas. In addition, irregular rightist bands visited the community several times and indulged in greater violence, killing several people and burning down seven houses. The guerrillas,

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669 722 [727] too, burned some houses, including those belonging to the three "rich" families of the community. These had fled to Volos, together with some other families from the village. The people who remained were inclined to support the guerrillas.

The guerrillas,

About two weeks after my visit in 1947, the army evacuated all the remaining inhabitants of Cherasia to Volos. There they remained in refugee quarters for two and a half years. The last guerrilla band disappeared from Mount Pelion only in 1950, some six months after the main guerrilla army in the north had retreated across the Albanian frontier. It was therefore late in 1950 before the inhabitants of Cherasia were allowed – or compelled – to return to their village.

727 653 [657] [232] Government authorities were, however, well aware of the difficulties that confronted the community. The returned refugees were given every help to re-establish themselves. They received, gratis, 238 sheep to serve as a nucleus for their flock, as well as materials for the reconstruction of their houses, most of which had suffered damage. Officials issued seed and implements as well. A comprehensive work relief program was set up; for about two years after their return, the men of Cherasia received wages for working on projects that directly benefited their community. In this fashion the new road over the mountain was built – shortening the way to Volos by nearly half. [346] [312] Similarly, new and very handsome school and church buildings were constructed; and pipes from the spring in the upper village brought fresh water into lower Cherasia for the first time. This was vital if the population was to remain in the lower village the year around, since water had previously been unavailable there in summer. Another side of the government policy was to give no help toward reconstruction of the village of upper Cherasia – perched, as it was, high on the mountain beyond the reach of roads. No doubt the authorities in this fashion hoped to tie the villagers to the accessible lower village, and

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thus prevent, or at least make more difficult, any future guerrilla action based upon the upper village.

The result of these expenditures is clearly visible today. The village looks handsomer than ever before; the sound of flowing water resounds refreshingly beside the neatly paved square in the center of the village, and the bright new tile roofs of the village shine in the sun. Only the houses of Nea Eleftherohori rival the impressive outward appearance of Cherasia, and the public structures of Nea Eleftherohori are far inferior to the new ones of the Thessalian village.

Nor have governmental efforts ended there. An agricultural extension agent visits Cherasia once or twice a month – a far more frequent visitation than I found in any other village. He attempted to establish viticulture and fruit trees in the village; but the vines perished, and the fruit trees are still spindly saplings, not yet bearing anything. Finally, additional water works are in process of construction, on the strength of a loan from the Ministry of Interior, issued free of interest and repayable in installments, starting only after five years. When this is finished, there will be enough water to irrigate 50 stremmata (12½ acres) of bottom land, and thus open up a new range of agricultural possibilities for the village.

Certainly, no one can say that either money or skill has been stinted in trying to make the life of Cherasia tolerable for its inhabitants. Yet it was perfectly apparent in 1956 that the effort had been totally inadequate. The people of the village were sullen and suspicious, and felt no gratitude toward the government authorities who had done so much for them. The spirit of the village seemed almost the same as in 1947, with the difference that now the rightists were again on top, and the majority saw little hope for gaining even the nighttime control their party had enjoyed in 1947. In talking with one or two of the villagers I gained the impression that they perversely hoped the

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various government plans would fail. Indeed, I suspect that the vines which the agricultural extension agent planted so hopefully may have died, not because his plans were faulty, but because the villagers failed to look after them.

Aside from the fact that Communist sympathies were deeply implanted in the village even before the war and were strengthened during and after it by the guerrilla movement, one can point to two facts that help to explain the village attitude. First, the persons who stand to benefit principally from agricultural improvements are naturally those who possess good land – the three families that acquired the bottom land in 1905. For the others, on their miserable hillside patches, there is little the agricultural extension agent can do.

Second, and much more important, is the fact that in 1954 the government cracked down on woodcutting. Roughly half of the mountain slopes, which had been "theirs" for as long as the men of the village could remember, were set aside as a forest preserve where woodcutting was forbidden. The villagers did not stop cutting wood, but they now do it by stealth, mostly at night, and go out in parties, with watchmen posted in appropriate places to warn them when one of the forest guards comes by. Such activity smacks more than a little of warfare against constituted authority; and in proportion as the men of the village make their living in this illegal fashion, they maintain an open hostility against the government. In doing so they remain faithful to the old "freedom" of the village, characteristic of their shepherd forebears and of their guerrilla relatives and contemporaries.

Small wonder, therefore, that the villagers regard the government as hypocritical and inimical – pretending to give them something with one hand (but really giving mainly to the "rich" families) while with the other depriving them of their very livelihood. No theoretical arguments, to the effect that Greece

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badly needs reforestation, and that in the long run everyone, including the people of Cherasia, will benefit from re-establishment of real forests on Mount Pelion, carry any weight among the woodcutters who feel that their rights have been ruthlessly disregarded, and their traditional way of life endangered. They do not care to be farmers, and for all their ragged poverty, despise such slavish souls as are content to labor long and hard on the land.

A deep and painful irony lies in the fact that without the bureaucratic paternalism of the government most of the people of Cherasia would, in all probability, have died during the guerrilla war. What happened in Kotta, where the arm of the government did not reach, might well have happened also in Cherasia, if the inhabitants of the village had not been evacuated to Volos in 1947 and fed there – however miserably – for two and a half years by government relief. And if the population of the village had shrunk to one third of what it actually was in 1956, then it does not seem improbable that much of the present bitterness would have dissolved, because then something like the free traditional way of life would have been possible again. Governmental intervention between 1947 and 1950 prevented the operation of the brutal old-fashioned remedy for overpopulation; but governmental intervention since 1950 has not yet sufficed (and seems unlikely to suffice in the future) to provide a tolerable life for the population that has so successfully been preserved from famine, disease and violent death.

The official records of Cherasia were in considerable confusion in 1956, and I was not able to secure satisfactory figures on the present and past population of the village. The main reason for this state of affairs is that many families are registered as inhabitants of Cherasia, but do not reside there. When the villagers were sent back to their homes, everyone was supposed to go, and officially everyone did. Actually, about twenty-five

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worth, however, the records showed 45 births since 1951 as against 18 deaths, and everything I heard and observed in the village pointed to a very high rate of natural increase.

Marriages occur early. When nearly everyone lacks land that is worth much of anything, there is no tendency to wait until the new family can be assured a landed inheritance. One young man said, somewhat cynically: "What I had when I married was a donkey, an axe and a strong back. I still have all three, and three children as well." The donkey, I gathered, was his wife's contribution to the new household; the axe and the back, his own. This, it seems, is more or less normal in the village; and one can easily understand how a desire to escape the nagging poverty of the parental household would lead young men and girls into early marriage, in order at least to enjoy personal independence and the satisfactions of the marriage bed. Even though the rest of their traditional style of life seems on the verge of ruin, this still is possible. Feeling a general despair of ever being able to live decently, feeling also a certain reckless defiance of all forms of authority – including parental authority – there seems to persons such as the young man who spoke to me no reason not to marry as soon as one can find a partner.

In spite of the rebellious mood prevailing in Cherasia, the officials of the village in 1956, although supposedly elected, represented the extreme right. The president and secretary were both members of the "rich" families, possessing comparatively broad acres, and both were very emphatic and voluble in asserting that the only way to deal with Communists was to use force. Indeed, they said that peace could come to Cherasia and to Greece only when Russia was blown up by American atom bombs. How they were elected, I do not know, but I am certain the election was not a free one. Suspicion and thinly veiled hostility dominated the relation between the villagers and their official leaders.

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621 Ten men in the village had come back after serving with the
669 guerrillas, and were kept under informal surveillance. Some
727 forty others had not returned, and most of these were presumed dead. Thirteen who had retreated behind the iron curtain in 1949 had, however, sent letters to their relatives. The village president, who provided these statistics, was obviously well informed on these matters and clearly believed that a major part of his duties was to keep a close watch upon leftists or suspected leftists.

166 Here, then, is a village scarcely better off than it was in 1947.
621 In spite of the expenditure of tens of thousands of dollars, de-
433 rived indirectly from American aid – indeed, *because* of such
[669] expenditure – the acute and untenable overcrowding of very poor land continues; and with it the political tensions of 1946–49 seethe, just beneath the surface. The only solution for Cherasia which seems to make any sense is to remove two thirds or more of the present population, and find land or work for them elsewhere. This has not been attempted; official policy has done just the opposite by placing barriers in the way of migration from the community.

[464] Unfortunately, Volos, the natural outlet for the surplus population of Cherasia, was itself undergoing a first-class economic crisis in 1956.[4] The port, which is the economic heart of the

[731] [653] 4. An earthquake which damaged many buildings in Volos rather badly in 1954 was, under the circumstances, a perverse blessing to many of the poorer families of the town. Repair and reconstruction got under way quickly, thanks to a special grant from the national budget (and assisted by a special American aid appropriation of $7 million for the purpose). This gave temporary work to many, but by 1956 this extraordinary source [288] of employment had dwindled. At the same time, a large textile plant in the city went on part time, and discharged a large proportion of its working force, as a result of a general crisis in the Greek textile trade. Consequently, Volos was, like Cherasia, unusually clean and tidy in 1956, and unusually depressed.

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city, was almost idle, so that serious unemployment was endemic in Volos, thus effectively blocking the easiest and most immediate escape for the hillsmen of Cherasia. In the Thessalian plain, villages like Lofiscos have not developed their agriculture to a level of intensity that would offer seasonal employment on a significant scale. Hence, for the time being the people of Cherasia are caught in a net scarcely of their own devising. At the same time they are stubbornly and angrily doing little or nothing to help themselves. It is not a hopeful situation, and if the general political climate of Greece should change, another guerrilla band could very likely be recruited from Cherasia without difficulty and at a moment's notice.

KARDAMILI

Kardamili lies on the sea, and can thus be described as a hill village only by looking inland, where high and barren hillsides rise abruptly from the coast, with only a small stream and a miniature delta to explain the location of the community. It is situated on the west coast of the central peninsula of the southern Peloponnese. Just to the south lies the wild and desolate country of Mani, a region where tribal organization and blood feud lasted into the twentieth century.

Kardamili raises a little wheat in the stream delta, but its major crop is olives. The rocky hillsides are covered with trees, skillfully planted in crevices and pockets of soil, many of which have been created artificially by terracing. The villagers reckon that they produce enough wheat to supply the community for about four months in the year; the rest has to be imported with money gained through the sale of olive oil.

Before the war, Kardamili added to its strictly agricultural resources by acting as a commercial center for a number of inland villages. They, too, exported olive oil, together with a few

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animals; and before roads were built, these villages brought their surplus on donkey-back (or on the hoof) to Kardamili, where it was put on board a small ship, and carried either to Athens or to Kalamata, the local metropolis, some thirty-five miles away on the rich Messenian plain. In addition, an oil-pressing plant was constructed in 1929 in Kardamili which employed as many as a hundred persons at the height of the season. Even when there were no olives to press, the plant kept open the year around by making soap and other products.

This was the basis upon which about 750 people were able to make a living in the village before the war. In recent years, however, the village has not prospered. The oil factory closed down permanently in 1940, depriving the village of what had been one of its most important resources. After the war, a new road, built in 1949–50, destroyed the importance of the port. Instead of bringing their olives to Kardamili on donkey-back and selling them there, the peasants of the hinterland loaded their produce directly onto trucks bound for Kalamata or Athens.

The new system was an obvious improvement on older methods of transport and marketing; but it meant that Kardamili, which for a few years between the wars had struggled toward becoming a miniature town, was compelled to sink back to a purely village status. One manifestation of this change is a decrease in population. In 1940, the village had about 750 inhabitants; in 1956 the population totaled only 512. War losses were insignificant, although guerrillas did kill two persons from the village. The whole community was forcibly evacuated to Kalamata in 1949 to prevent its exploitation by guerrilla bands that ranged even this far south. The evacuation was perhaps scarcely justified, however, since the guerrillas never again came near, and when the villagers returned in 1950 they found their houses intact.

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433 662 663 construction of the economy and the transformation of the civil service since 1947 seem to offer a chance for escape from this circle, but escape is as yet by no means assured.

The Communist Problem

668 669 The Communist party was declared illegal in October 1947, and has remained illegal since then. Communist party leaders first joined the guerrillas, then retreated with the remnant of the guerrilla army behind the iron curtain. It seems entirely likely that the exile leadership was torn by faction and recrimination. Backwash from the shipwreck of their hopes on the Macedonian issue in 1949 must have continued to distract the secret councils of the party. Equally, the changing winds of doctrine that followed Stalin's death shook the Greek Communist party, and, combined perhaps with other factors, led in the fall of 1956 to the demotion of Nicholas Zachariades and the substitution of an almost unknown personality as Secretary General.

Rather strenuous police measures were taken during the guerrilla war to break up the Communist underground organization. Many people were arrested and several hundred were shot. How effective these measures were in breaking down the party organization cannot be judged by anyone standing outside the inmost party circles. Furthermore, the failure of the guerrilla enterprise, and the collision between Greek national feeling and international Communist policy over the question of the future of Macedonia must have disheartened even the most fanatical Communists in Greece, and certainly discredited Communism in the eyes of many who had formerly been sympathetic.

668 Whether these events mean that the Communist threat to Greece is lastingly removed, or whether the Greek Communist